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THE SECOND ESSAY

ON

THE EARL OF CHATHAM

(WILLIAM PITT)

BY

LORD MACAULAY



NEW YORK ··· CINCINNATI ··· CHICAGO

AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

1892

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INTRODUCTION.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY was born in Leicestershire, Oct. 25, 1800. "Of all good gifts which it is in the power of fortune to bestow," says one of his biographers, "none can surpass the being born of wise, honorable, and tender parents." This was Macaulay's happy lot. His father was Zachary Macaulay, remembered for his zealous opposition to the slave trade. His mother was Selina Mills, a lady of Quaker descent. Fortune had not withheld other gifts. Macaulay's father was a wealthy merchant, and thus all the conditions were favorable to the development of the abilities and character that the son had inherited.

Before he was ten years old, as one of his sisters tells us, Macaulay showed a decided bent for literature, and a good deal of juvenile prose and verse attests his precocity. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1818. He was averse to mathematical and scientific studies, but achieved much distinction at the university by his poems and essays, and by his speeches in the debating society. He received his degree in 1822, and four years later was admitted to the bar.

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In 1834 he was appointed to a seat in the Supreme Council of India. This place he held till 1838, and the munificent salary attached to it (£10,000) gave him the independence needful for the carrying-out of his great literary work, the "History of England." His "Essays," by which he is best known to the general reader, were many of them of the nature of preliminary historical studies. Before his political preferment, these pieces had served to increase Macaulay's slender income: those written after his return from India were the outcome of choice and greater leisure.

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His fame rests on his "Lays of Ancient Rome," his "History," and his "Essays." It is with the last that we are here concerned. Though the titles of the "Essays" suggest biography, most of them are in fact detached chapters of history. The Second Essay on Chatham—the text of the following pages—discloses in every paragraph Macaulay's marvelous mastery of historic detail. Here and there are stately and melodious passages; yet the very minuteness of the account, with its array of dates, names, and titles, sensibly jolts and impedes the progress of the piece.

Examples of Macaulay's more fluent manner are afforded by his essay on "Sir William Temple" and by his "Milton." It is customary to speak of his early style as florid; and Macaulay himself declared in later life that his "Milton" was "overloaded with gaudy and ungraceful ornament." But just as the first form in which one would cast a thought is often the best, so it will frequently happen that the earliest work of a great artist has characteristic excellences that the refinement of maturity cannot replace. It was not without reason that the essay on "Milton" drew all eyes upon the writer of it.

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WILLIAM PITT was born at Westminster in 1708. He died at the age of seventy, having been for twenty years the greatest

figure in English public life. To distinguish him from his illustrious son and namesake, he is commonly referred to by his title. When, in 1766, he became first Earl of Chatham, he divested himself, as Macaulay points out in a following page, of that far higher title of "the Great Commoner," which an admiring nation had conferred upon him.

The life of this great man is of interest to lovers of liberty and law everywhere. To us Americans, who live under the Constitution of 1787, whatever relates to the career of the English statesman who "rejoiced that America had resisted" must have an interest deeper still. The accompanying Second Essay of Macaulay outlines the political life of Chatham after the year 1760. Only the salient features of his earlier career can here be indicated.

Pitt was educated at Oxford, where he was distinguished rather for his extensive reading and information than for any special attainments. His university studies were cut short by a severe attack of gout. This disease had tortured him even in boyhood; he was never wholly free from it; and it was the cause of his death in 1778.

In 1735 young Pitt entered Parliament for the famous rotten-borough of Old Sarum. He inherited this seat, as he may have inherited the gout, from his grandfather, Thomas Pitt, who was at one time governor of Madras, and who, out of the wealth this post brought him, had purchased the tenure of the borough.

In Parliament Pitt allied himself at once with the Whig opposition. Among his most effective speeches were several against the Hanoverian subsidies,—the substance of which he afterward recanted,—and those in which, in 1742, he urged the investigation of Walpole's administration. Only the general tenor of these

speeches is known. The familiar and famous oration in which he pleaded guilty to "the atrocious crime of being a young man," — a supposed sneer of Walpole's, — was never delivered by Pitt. It was, like other celebrated speeches, written by Samuel Johnson in his "Parliamentary Reports" for the "Gentleman's Magazine."

In 1746 Pitt was appointed paymaster-general of the forces, under the administration of the Pelhams. The rich perquisites of this place consisted of interest on public moneys while in hand, and of a commission on all foreign subsidies. These perquisites had been pocketed without question by all previous paymasters-general. Pitt, though poor, — he was a younger son, — refused to draw a shilling from his office beyond the salary legally attaching to it. This refusal was well calculated to call forth, in that age of venal statesmen, the popular confidence which at once followed upon it.

In 1754 Pitt married Lady Hester Grenville, the sister of George Grenville and of the first Earl Temple. Macaulay frequently refers to the political bearings of this alliance. In 1757 the famous coalition ministry of Pitt and Newcastle was formed, with Pitt as secretary of state for foreign affairs. This cabinet held together for four years; and it was during Pitt's administration that England achieved her greatest successes in India, Europe, and America. The following essay takes up at this point the subject of his later career.

Pitt was a man of penetrating intelligence, resolute courage, promptitude, self-command, and firmness of purpose. In his administration of foreign affairs he was an enthusiastic patriot, having the sole purpose of promoting the welfare and influence of England. To this end all the energies of his nature were constantly directed. Nothing restrained his arrogance in dealing

with foreign nations, and in many ways he was deserving of the epithet of "dictator" applied to him by Dr. Johnson.

It has been said that the theme afforded by Chatham's public life was especially congenial to Macaulay. The historian's own nature was firm and courageous; and courage and firmness were virtues that, when exhibited in the lives of other men, as in Chatham and Clive, kindled in him a special fervor. Yet Macaulay could call Chatham "vain and resentful," "an actor in the closet, at council, and in Parliament." And it is probable that the estimate of Pitt that is to be found in the two essays is the finest example of balanced judgments that Macaulay has left us.

He began the first of these sketches by saying, "All who employ themselves in illustrating the lives of others are peculiarly exposed to the disease of admiration." These words of judicious caution have not sufficed to deter later historians from indiscriminating eulogy of Lord Chatham. His real achievements were very great, and by these his title to greatness was long ago fixed.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM.¹

MORE than ten years ago we commenced a sketch of the political life of the great Lord Chatham.² We then stopped at the death of George II., with the intention of speedily resuming our task. Circumstances, which it would be tedious to explain, long prevented us from carrying this intention into effect. Nor can we regret the delay, for the materials which were within our reach in 1834 were scanty and unsatisfactory when compared with those which we at present possess.³ Even now, though we have had access to some valuable sources of information which have not yet been opened to the public, we cannot but feel that the history of the first ten years of the reign of George III. is but imperfectly known to us; nevertheless we are inclined to think that we are in a condition to lay before our readers a narrative neither uninteresting nor unimportant. We therefore return with pleasure to our long-interrupted labor.

We left Pitt in the zenith of prosperity and glory, the idol of England, the terror of France, the admiration of the whole civilized world.⁴ The wind, from whatever quarter it blew, carried to

¹ From the *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1844. This is the last essay that Macaulay wrote for that periodical.

² *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1834.

³ This essay was in theory a "review" of Pitt's *Correspondence*, and of the *Letters of Walpole to Sir Horace Mann*, then recently republished.

⁴ With Pitt as secretary of state for foreign affairs, the French power in Canada and in India had been broken; and when George II. died, in 1760, England was the first maritime and colonial power in the world.

England tidings of battles won, fortresses taken, provinces added to the empire. At home factions had sunk into a lethargy, such as had never been known since the great religious schism of the sixteenth century¹ had roused the public mind from repose.

In order that the events which we have to relate may be clearly understood, it may be desirable that we should advert to the causes which had for a time suspended the animation of both the great English parties.

If, rejecting all that is merely accidental, we look at the essential characteristics of the Whig and the Tory, we may consider each of them as the representative of a great principle, essential to the welfare of nations. One is in an especial manner the guardian of liberty; and the other, of order. One is the moving power, and the other the steady power of the state. One is the sail, without which society would make no progress; the other, the ballast, without which there would be small safety in a tempest. But, during the forty-six years which followed the accession of the House of Hanover,² these distinctive peculiarities seemed to be effaced. The Whig conceived that he could not better serve the cause of civil and religious freedom than by strenuously supporting the Protestant dynasty: the Tory conceived that he could not better prove his hatred of revolutions than by attacking a government to which a revolution had given birth.³ Both came by degrees to attach more importance to the means than to the end; both were thrown into unnatural situations; and both, like animals transported to an uncongenial climate, languished and degenerated. The Tory, removed from the

¹ The abolition of the papal power in England, and the establishment of the Anglican Church.

² By the Act of Settlement of 1701, the succession to the English crown was secured, next after Anne, to Sophia, the Electress of Hanover, and her Protestant descendants. Accordingly, upon the death of Queen Anne in 1714, George Lewis of Brunswick, the Elector of Hanover, became George I. of England. The reigning family are his descendants.

³ The revolution of 1688, when Parliament adopted the famous Bill of Rights, curtailing the powers of the Crown.

sunshine of the court, was as a camel in the snows of Lapland: the Whig, basking in the rays of royal favor, was as a reindeer in the sands of Arabia.

Dante tells us¹ that he saw, in Malebolge, a strange encounter between a human form and a serpent. The enemies, after cruel wounds inflicted, stood for a time glaring on each other. A great cloud surrounded them, and then a wonderful metamorphosis began. Each creature was transfigured into the likeness of its antagonist. The serpent's tail divided itself into two legs: the man's legs intertwined themselves into a tail. The body of the serpent put forth arms: the arms of the man shrank into his body. At length the serpent stood up a man, and spake: the man sank down a serpent, and glided, hissing, away. Something like this was the transformation which, during the reign of George I.,² befell the two English parties. Each gradually took the shape and color of its foe, till at length the Tory rose up erect the zealot of freedom, and the Whig crawled and licked the dust at the feet of power.

It is true, that when these degenerate politicians discussed questions merely speculative, and, above all, when they discussed questions relating to the conduct of their own grandfathers, they still seemed to differ as their grandfathers had differed. The Whig, who during three Parliaments had never given one vote against the court, and who was ready to sell his soul for the comptroller's staff or for the Great Wardrobe, still professed to draw his political doctrines from Locke and Milton; still worshiped the memory of Pym and Hampden; and would still, on the 30th of January, take his glass, first to the man in the mask, and then to the man who would do it without a mask.³ The Tory, on the

¹ *Inferno*, canto xxv., lines 41-131.

² George I. reigned from 1714 to 1727; George II., from 1727 to 1760.

³ Pym and Hampden in Parliament, and Milton with the pen, were the most influential upholders of the Commonwealth (1649-59). Akin to their free and inquisitive minds was the spirit of Locke, but his politics and political writings belonged to a somewhat later period. Charles I. was beheaded Jan. 30, 1649, the headsman being masked, as was then the custom.

other hand, while he reviled the mild and temperate Walpole as a deadly enemy of liberty, could see nothing to reprobate in the iron tyranny of Strafford and Laud.¹ But, whatever judgment the Whig or the Tory of that age might pronounce on transactions long past, there can be no doubt, that, as respected the practical questions then pending, the Tory was a reformer, and indeed an intemperate and indiscreet reformer, while the Whig was conservative even to bigotry.² We have ourselves seen similar effects produced in a neighboring country by similar causes. Who would have believed, fifteen years ago,³ that M. Guizot and M. Villemain would have to defend property and social order against the attacks of such enemies as M. Genoude and M. de La Roche Jaquelin?

Thus the successors of the old Cavaliers had turned demagogues: the successors of the old Roundheads had turned courtiers. Yet was it long before their mutual animosity began to abate, for it is the nature of parties to retain their original enmities far more firmly than their original principles. During many years, a generation of Whigs, whom Sidney would have spurned as slaves, continued to wage deadly war with a generation of Tories whom Jeffreys would have hanged for republicans.⁴

Through the whole reign of George I., and through nearly half of the reign of George II., a Tory was regarded as an enemy of the reigning house, and was excluded from all the favors of the Crown. Though most of the country gentlemen were Tories,

¹ Strafford and Laud were aggressive supporters of royal prerogative as against the Parliament, and both suffered death for treason to the Commonwealth. Sir Robert Walpole was (Whig) prime-minister from 1721 to 1742.

² This passage used to be cited to correct the once common prejudice against Macaulay, that he was to the last a narrow and bitter Whig.

³ That is, before the revolution of 1830.

⁴ Algernon Sidney had applauded the execution of Charles I. Jeffreys, the "infamous judge," was a creature of Charles II. This powerful illustration of Macaulay's derives much of its force from the fact that it was Jeffreys who in 1683 pronounced upon Sidney sentence of death, the outcome of a mock-trial for treasonable conspiracy against the King.

none but Whigs were created peers and baronets.' Though most of the clergy were Tories, none but Whigs were appointed deans and bishops. In every county, opulent and well-descended Tory squires complained that their names were left out of the commission of the peace,¹ while men of small estate and mean birth, who were for toleration and excise, septennial parliaments and standing armies, presided at quarter sessions, and became deputy-lieutenants.

By degrees some approaches were made towards a reconciliation. While Walpole was at the head of affairs, enmity to his power induced a large and powerful body of Whigs, headed by the heir-apparent² of the throne, to make an alliance with the Tories, and a truce even with the Jacobites.³ After Sir Robert's fall,⁴ the ban which lay on the Tory party was taken off. The chief places in the administration continued to be filled by Whigs, and, indeed, could scarcely have been filled otherwise; for the Tory nobility and gentry, though strong in numbers and in property, had among them scarcely a single man distinguished by talents, either for business or for debate. A few of them, however, were admitted to subordinate offices; and this indulgence produced a softening effect on the temper of the whole body. The first levee of George II. after Walpole's resignation was a remarkable spectacle. Mingled with the constant supporters of the House of Brunswick,⁵ with the Russells, the Cavendishes, and the Pelhams, appeared a crowd of faces utterly unknown to the pages and gentleman ushers, lords of rural manors, whose ale and foxhounds were renowned in the neighborhood of the Mendip hills, or round the Wrekin,⁶ but who had never crossed the

¹ A commission under the great seal constituting one or more persons justices of the peace.

² Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of George III.

³ From the Latin *Jacobus* ("James"); the adherents of James II. after his abdication, or of his descendants.

⁴ In 1742.

⁵ See Note 3, p. 12.

⁶ Hills in Somersetshire and Shropshire, both of which counties are remote from the capital.

threshold of the palace since the days when Oxford, with the white staff in his hand, stood behind Queen Anne.¹

During the eighteen years which followed this day, both factions were gradually sinking deeper and deeper into repose. The apathy of the public mind is partly to be ascribed to the unjust violence with which the administration of Walpole had been assailed. In the body politic, as in the natural body, morbid languor generally succeeds morbid excitement. The people had been maddened by sophistry, by calumny, by rhetoric, by stimulants applied to the national pride. In the fullness of bread, they had raved as if famine had been in the land. While enjoying such a measure of civil and religious freedom as, till then, no great society had ever known, they had cried out for a Timoleon or a Brutus² to stab their oppressor to the heart. They were in this frame of mind when the change of administration took place; and they soon found that there was to be no change whatever in the system of government. The natural consequences followed. To frantic zeal succeeded sullen indifference. The cant of patriotism had not merely ceased to charm the public ear, but had become as nauseous as the cant of Puritanism after the downfall of the Rump.³ The hot fit was over; the cold fit had begun: and it was long before seditious arts, or even real grievances, could bring back the fiery paroxysm which had run its course and reached its termination.

Two attempts were made to disturb this tranquillity: the banished heir of the House of Stuart⁴ headed a rebellion; the discontented heir of the House of Brunswick headed an opposition. Both the rebellion and the opposition came to nothing. The

¹ That is, since the accession of the House of Hanover. The *white staff* is the lord high treasurer's badge of office.

² Zealots in the cause of liberty who conspired against and assisted in the assassination of their civil rulers,—Timoleon of his elder brother Timophanes, and Brutus of his friend Cæsar.

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⁴ Charles Edward Stuart, grandson of James II.

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to the delight of the world, while other words differently arranged by another do not."

The most eminent of later English historians, Freeman, says of Macaulay's writing: "He is a model of style, — of style not merely as a kind of luxury, but of style in its practical aspect. . . . I learned from him that if I wished to be understood by others, or indeed by myself, I must avoid, not always long sentences, — for long sentences may often be perfectly clear, — but involved, complicated, parenthetical sentences. I learned that I must avoid sentences crowded with relatives and participles, — sentences in which things are not so much directly stated as implied in some dark and puzzling fashion. I learned, also, never to be afraid of using the same word or name over and over again, if by that means anything could be added to clearness or force. Macaulay never goes on, like some writers, talking about 'the former' and 'the latter,' 'he, she, it, they,' through clause after clause, while his reader has to look back to see which of several persons it is that is so darkly referred to. No doubt a pronoun, like any other word, may often be repeated with advantage, if it is perfectly clear who is meant by the noun; and with Macaulay's pronouns it is always perfectly clear who is meant by them. . . . The care which Macaulay took to write, before all things, good and clear English, may be followed by writers who make no attempt to imitate his style, and who may be led by nature to some quite different style of their own. In every language and in every kind of writing, purity of speech, and clearness of expression, must be the first virtues of all."

WILLIAM PITT was born at Westminster in 1708. He died at the age of seventy, having been for twenty years the greatest

figure in English public life. To distinguish him from his illustrious son and namesake, he is commonly referred to by his title. When, in 1766, he became first Earl of Chatham, he divested himself, as Macaulay points out in a following page, of that far higher title of "the Great Commoner," which an admiring nation had conferred upon him.

The life of this great man is of interest to lovers of liberty and law everywhere. To us Americans, who live under the Constitution of 1787, whatever relates to the career of the English statesman who "rejoiced that America had resisted" must have an interest deeper still. The accompanying Second Essay of Macaulay outlines the political life of Chatham after the year 1760. Only the salient features of his earlier career can here be indicated.

Pitt was educated at Oxford, where he was distinguished rather for his extensive reading and information than for any special attainments. His university studies were cut short by a severe attack of gout. This disease had tortured him even in boyhood; he was never wholly free from it; and it was the cause of his death in 1778.

In 1735 young Pitt entered Parliament for the famous rotten-borough of Old Sarum. He inherited this seat, as he may have inherited the gout, from his grandfather, Thomas Pitt, who was at one time governor of Madras, and who, out of the wealth this post brought him, had purchased the tenure of the borough.

In Parliament Pitt allied himself at once with the Whig opposition. Among his most effective speeches were several against the Hanoverian subsidies,—the substance of which he afterward recanted,—and those in which, in 1742, he urged the investigation of Walpole's administration. Only the general tenor of these

speeches is known. The familiar and famous oration in which he pleaded guilty to "the atrocious crime of being a young man," — a supposed sneer of Walpole's, — was never delivered by Pitt. It was, like other celebrated speeches, written by Samuel Johnson in his "Parliamentary Reports" for the "Gentleman's Magazine."

In 1746 Pitt was appointed paymaster-general of the forces, under the administration of the Pelhams. The rich perquisites of this place consisted of interest on public moneys while in hand, and of a commission on all foreign subsidies. These perquisites had been pocketed without question by all previous paymasters-general. Pitt, though poor, — he was a younger son, — refused to draw a shilling from his office beyond the salary legally attaching to it. This refusal was well calculated to call forth, in that age of venal statesmen, the popular confidence which at once followed upon it.

In 1754 Pitt married Lady Hester Grenville, the sister of George Grenville and of the first Earl Temple. Macaulay frequently refers to the political bearings of this alliance. In 1757 the famous coalition ministry of Pitt and Newcastle was formed, with Pitt as secretary of state for foreign affairs. This cabinet held together for four years; and it was during Pitt's administration that England achieved her greatest successes in India, Europe, and America. The following essay takes up at this point the subject of his later career.

Pitt was a man of penetrating intelligence, resolute courage, promptitude, self-command, and firmness of purpose. In his administration of foreign affairs he was an enthusiastic patriot, having the sole purpose of promoting the welfare and influence of England. To this end all the energies of his nature were constantly directed. Nothing restrained his arrogance in dealing

with foreign nations, and in many ways he was deserving of the epithet of "dictator" applied to him by Dr. Johnson.

It has been said that the theme afforded by Chatham's public life was especially congenial to Macaulay. The historian's own nature was firm and courageous; and courage and firmness were virtues that, when exhibited in the lives of other men, as in Chatham and Clive, kindled in him a special fervor. Yet Macaulay could call Chatham "vain and resentful," "an actor in the closet, at council, and in Parliament." And it is probable that the estimate of Pitt that is to be found in the two essays is the finest example of balanced judgments that Macaulay has left us.

He began the first of these sketches by saying, "All who employ themselves in illustrating the lives of others are peculiarly exposed to the disease of admiration." These words of judicious caution have not sufficed to deter later historians from indiscriminating eulogy of Lord Chatham. His real achievements were very great, and by these his title to greatness was long ago fixed.

THE EARL OF CHATHAM.¹

MORE than ten years ago we commenced a sketch of the political life of the great Lord Chatham.² We then stopped at the death of George II., with the intention of speedily resuming our task. Circumstances, which it would be tedious to explain, long prevented us from carrying this intention into effect. Nor can we regret the delay, for the materials which were within our reach in 1834 were scanty and unsatisfactory when compared with those which we at present possess.³ Even now, though we have had access to some valuable sources of information which have not yet been opened to the public, we cannot but feel that the history of the first ten years of the reign of George III. is but imperfectly known to us; nevertheless we are inclined to think that we are in a condition to lay before our readers a narrative neither uninteresting nor unimportant. We therefore return with pleasure to our long-interrupted labor.

We left Pitt in the zenith of prosperity and glory, the idol of England, the terror of France, the admiration of the whole civilized world.⁴ The wind, from whatever quarter it blew, carried to

¹ From the *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1844. This is the last essay that Macaulay wrote for that periodical.

² *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1834.

³ This essay was in theory a "review" of Pitt's Correspondence, and of the Letters of Walpole to Sir Horace Mann, then recently republished.

⁴ With Pitt as secretary of state for foreign affairs, the French power in Canada and in India had been broken; and when George II. died, in 1760, England was the first maritime and colonial power in the world.

England tidings of battles won, fortresses taken, provinces added to the empire. At home factions had sunk into a lethargy, such as had never been known since the great religious schism of the sixteenth century¹ had roused the public mind from repose.

In order that the events which we have to relate may be clearly understood, it may be desirable that we should advert to the causes which had for a time suspended the animation of both the great English parties.

If, rejecting all that is merely accidental, we look at the essential characteristics of the Whig and the Tory, we may consider each of them as the representative of a great principle, essential to the welfare of nations. One is in an especial manner the guardian of liberty; and the other, of order. One is the moving power, and the other the steadying power of the state. One is the sail, without which society would make no progress; the other, the ballast, without which there would be small safety in a tempest. But, during the forty-six years which followed the accession of the House of Hanover,² these distinctive peculiarities seemed to be effaced. The Whig conceived that he could not better serve the cause of civil and religious freedom than by strenuously supporting the Protestant dynasty: the Tory conceived that he could not better prove his hatred of revolutions than by attacking a government to which a revolution had given birth.³ Both came by degrees to attach more importance to the means than to the end; both were thrown into unnatural situations; and both, like animals transported to an uncongenial climate, languished and degenerated. The Tory, removed from the

¹ The abolition of the papal power in England, and the establishment of the Anglican Church.

² By the Act of Settlement of 1701, the succession to the English crown was secured, next after Anne, to Sophia, the Electress of Hanover, and her Protestant descendants. Accordingly, upon the death of Queen Anne in 1714, George Lewis of Brunswick, the Elector of Hanover, became George I. of England. The reigning family are his descendants.

³ The revolution of 1688, when Parliament adopted the famous Bill of Rights, curtailing the powers of the Crown.

sunshine of the court, was as a camel in the snows of Lapland: the Whig, basking in the rays of royal favor, was as a reindeer in the sands of Arabia.

Dante tells us¹ that he saw, in Malebolge, a strange encounter between a human form and a serpent. The enemies, after cruel wounds inflicted, stood for a time glaring on each other. A great cloud surrounded them, and then a wonderful metamorphosis began. Each creature was transfigured into the likeness of its antagonist. The serpent's tail divided itself into two legs: the man's legs intertwined themselves into a tail. The body of the serpent put forth arms: the arms of the man shrank into his body. At length the serpent stood up a man, and spake: the man sank down a serpent, and glided, hissing, away. Something like this was the transformation which, during the reign of George I.,² befell the two English parties. Each gradually took the shape and color of its foe, till at length the Tory rose up erect the zealot of freedom, and the Whig crawled and licked the dust at the feet of power.

It is true, that when these degenerate politicians discussed questions merely speculative, and, above all, when they discussed questions relating to the conduct of their own grandfathers, they still seemed to differ as their grandfathers had differed. The Whig, who during three Parliaments had never given one vote against the court, and who was ready to sell his soul for the comptroller's staff or for the Great Wardrobe, still professed to draw his political doctrines from Locke and Milton; still worshiped the memory of Pym and Hampden; and would still, on the 30th of January, take his glass, first to the man in the mask, and then to the man who would do it without a mask.³ The Tory, on the

¹ *Inferno*, canto xxv., lines 41-131.

² George I. reigned from 1714 to 1727; George II., from 1727 to 1760.

³ Pym and Hampden in Parliament, and Milton with the pen, were the most influential upholders of the Commonwealth (1649-59). Akin to their free and inquisitive minds was the spirit of Locke, but his politics and political writings belonged to a somewhat later period. Charles I. was beheaded Jan. 30, 1649, the headsman being masked, as was then the custom.

other hand, while he reviled the mild and temperate Walpole as a deadly enemy of liberty, could see nothing to reprobate in the iron tyranny of Strafford and Laud.¹ But, whatever judgment the Whig or the Tory of that age might pronounce on transactions long past, there can be no doubt, that, as respected the practical questions then pending, the Tory was a reformer, and indeed an intemperate and indiscreet reformer, while the Whig was conservative even to bigotry.² We have ourselves seen similar effects produced in a neighboring country by similar causes. Who would have believed, fifteen years ago,³ that M. Guizot and M. Villemain would have to defend property and social order against the attacks of such enemies as M. Genoude and M. de La Roche Jaquelin?

Thus the successors of the old Cavaliers had turned demagogues: the successors of the old Roundheads had turned courtiers. Yet was it long before their mutual animosity began to abate, for it is the nature of parties to retain their original enmities far more firmly than their original principles. During many years, a generation of Whigs, whom Sidney would have spurned as slaves, continued to wage deadly war with a generation of Tories whom Jeffreys would have hanged for republicans.⁴

Through the whole reign of George I., and through nearly half of the reign of George II., a Tory was regarded as an enemy of the reigning house, and was excluded from all the favors of the Crown. Though most of the country gentlemen were Tories,

¹ Strafford and Laud were aggressive supporters of royal prerogative as against the Parliament, and both suffered death for treason to the Commonwealth. Sir Robert Walpole was (Whig) prime-minister from 1721 to 1742.

² This passage used to be cited to correct the once common prejudice against Macaulay, that he was to the last a narrow and bitter Whig.

³ That is, before the revolution of 1830.

⁴ Algernon Sidney had applauded the execution of Charles I. Jeffreys, the "infamous judge," was a creature of Charles II. This powerful illustration of Macaulay's derives much of its force from the fact that it was Jeffreys who in 1683 pronounced upon Sidney sentence of death, the outcome of a mock-trial for treasonable conspiracy against the King.

none but Whigs were created peers and baronets. Though most of the clergy were Tories, none but Whigs were appointed deans and bishops. In every county, opulent and well-descended Tory squires complained that their names were left out of the commission of the peace,¹ while men of small estate and mean birth, who were for toleration and excise, septennial parliaments and standing armies, presided at quarter sessions, and became deputy-lieutenants.

By degrees some approaches were made towards a reconciliation. While Walpole was at the head of affairs, enmity to his power induced a large and powerful body of Whigs, headed by the heir-apparent² of the throne, to make an alliance with the Tories, and a truce even with the Jacobites.³ After Sir Robert's fall,⁴ the ban which lay on the Tory party was taken off. The chief places in the administration continued to be filled by Whigs, and, indeed, could scarcely have been filled otherwise; for the Tory nobility and gentry, though strong in numbers and in property, had among them scarcely a single man distinguished by talents, either for business or for debate. A few of them, however, were admitted to subordinate offices; and this indulgence produced a softening effect on the temper of the whole body. The first levee of George II. after Walpole's resignation was a remarkable spectacle. Mingled with the constant supporters of the House of Brunswick,⁵ with the Russells, the Cavendishes, and the Pelhams, appeared a crowd of faces utterly unknown to the pages and gentleman ushers, lords of rural manors, whose ale and foxhounds were renowned in the neighborhood of the Mendip hills, or round the Wrekin,⁶ but who had never crossed the

¹ A commission under the great seal constituting one or more persons justices of the peace.

² Frederick, Prince of Wales, father of George III.

³ From the Latin *Jacobus* ("James"); the adherents of James II. after his abdication, or of his descendants.

⁴ In 1742.

⁵ See Note 3, p. 12.

⁶ Hills in Somersetshire and Shropshire, both of which counties are remote from the capital.

threshold of the palace since the days when Oxford, with the white staff in his hand, stood behind Queen Anne.¹

During the eighteen years which followed this day, both factions were gradually sinking deeper and deeper into repose. The apathy of the public mind is partly to be ascribed to the unjust violence with which the administration of Walpole had been assailed. In the body politic, as in the natural body, morbid languor generally succeeds morbid excitement. The people had been maddened by sophistry, by calumny, by rhetoric, by stimulants applied to the national pride. In the fullness of bread, they had raved as if famine had been in the land. While enjoying such a measure of civil and religious freedom as, till then, no great society had ever known, they had cried out for a Timoleon or a Brutus² to stab their oppressor to the heart. They were in this frame of mind when the change of administration took place; and they soon found that there was to be no change whatever in the system of government. The natural consequences followed. To frantic zeal succeeded sullen indifference. The cant of patriotism had not merely ceased to charm the public ear, but had become as nauseous as the cant of Puritanism after the downfall of the Rump.³ The hot fit was over; the cold fit had begun: and it was long before seditious arts, or even real grievances, could bring back the fiery paroxysm which had run its course and reached its termination.

Two attempts were made to disturb this tranquillity: the banished heir of the House of Stuart⁴ headed a rebellion; the discontented heir of the House of Brunswick headed an opposition. Both the rebellion and the opposition came to nothing. The

¹ That is, since the accession of the House of Hanover. The *white staff* is the lord high treasurer's badge of office.

² Zealots in the cause of liberty who conspired against and assisted in the assassination of their civil rulers,—Timoleon of his elder brother Timophanes, and Brutus of his friend Cæsar.

³ That is, the so-called Rump Parliament of the Commonwealth.

⁴ Charles Edward Stuart, grandson of James II.

commence in all probability by civil war,¹ and, if consummated, must be consummated by the establishment of absolute monarchy. Or was the patriot King to carry the House of Commons with him in his upright designs? By what means? Interdicting himself from the use of corrupt influence, what motive was he to address to the Dodingtons and Winningtons?² Was cupidity, strengthened by habit, to be laid asleep by a few fine sentences about virtue and union?

Absurd as this theory was, it had many admirers, particularly among men of letters. It was now to be reduced to practice; and the result was, as any man of sagacity must have foreseen, the most piteous and ridiculous of failures.

On the very day of the young King's accession appeared some signs which indicated the approach of a great change. The speech which he made to his council was not submitted to the cabinet. It was drawn up by Bute, and contained some expressions which might be construed into reflections on the conduct of affairs during the late reign. Pitt remonstrated, and begged that these expressions might be softened down in the printed copy; but it was not till after some hours of altercation that Bute yielded; and, even after Bute had yielded, the King affected to hold out till the following afternoon. On the same day on which this singular contest took place, Bute was not only sworn of the privy council, but introduced into the cabinet.

Soon after this, Lord Holderness, one of the secretaries of state, in pursuance of a plan concerted with the Court, resigned the seals. Bute was instantly appointed to the vacant place. A general election speedily followed, and the new secretary entered

¹ This passage is an allusion to the civil war of the previous century, which was largely due to the forced loans and illegal taxes of Charles I. The famous ship-moneys were levies for the naval defense of the country, imposed in 1634 on the coast towns, and in 1635-36 on the whole of England.

² Ringleaders in parliamentary corruption. Dodington (Lord Melcombe) published a *Diary*, which affords "an admirable picture of himself, and an instructive lesson for future statesmen."

Parliament in the only way in which he then could enter it, as one of the sixteen representative peers of Scotland.¹

Had the ministers been firmly united, it can scarcely be doubted that they would have been able to withstand the Court. The parliamentary influence of the Whig aristocracy, combined with the genius, the virtue, and the fame of Pitt, would have been irresistible. But there had been in the cabinet of George II. latent jealousies and enmities, which now began to show themselves. Pitt had been estranged from his old ally Legge, the chancellor of the exchequer. Some of the ministers were envious of Pitt's popularity; others were, not altogether without cause, disgusted by his imperious and haughty demeanor; others, again, were honestly opposed to some parts of his policy. They admitted that he had found the country in the depths of humiliation, and had raised it to the height of glory; they admitted that he had conducted the war with energy, ability, and splendid success; but they began to hint that the drain on the resources of the state was unexampled, and that the public debt was increasing with a speed at which Montague or Godolphin² would have stood aghast. Some of the acquisitions made by our fleets and armies were, it was acknowledged, profitable as well as honorable; but, now that George II. was dead, a courtier might venture to ask why England was to become a party in a dispute between two German powers. What was it to her whether the House of Hapsburg or the House of Brandenburg ruled in Silesia? Why were the best English regiments fighting on the Main? Why were the Prussian battalions paid with English gold? The great minister seemed to think it beneath him to calculate the

¹ By the treaty of Union in 1707 the peerage of Scotland was to be represented by sixteen of its number, chosen for each Parliament by the Scottish peers themselves. By a resolution of the House of Lords four years later, a patent of peerage of the United Kingdom granted to a Scottish peer carried with it no right to a seat in Parliament.

² That is, that expenditures were without precedent. Montague and Godolphin were finance ministers in the reigns of James II., William III., and Anne.

price of victory. As long as the Tower guns were fired, as the streets were illuminated, as French banners were carried in triumph through London, it was to him matter of indifference to what extent the public burdens were augmented. Nay, he seemed to glory in the magnitude of those sacrifices which the people, fascinated by his eloquence and success, had too readily made, and would long and bitterly regret. There was no check on waste or embezzlement. Our commissaries returned from the camp of Prince Ferdinand¹ to buy boroughs, to rear palaces, to rival the magnificence of the old aristocracy of the realm. Already had we borrowed, in four years of war, more than the most skillful and economical government would pay in forty years of peace. But the prospect of peace was as remote as ever. It could not be doubted that France, smarting and prostrate, would consent to fair terms of accommodation; but this was not what Pitt wanted. War had made him powerful and popular; with war all that was brightest in his life was associated; for war his talents were peculiarly fitted. He had at length begun to love war for its own sake, and was more disposed to quarrel with neutrals than to make peace with enemies.

Such were the views of the Duke of Bedford and of the Earl of Hardwicke; but no member of the government held these opinions so strongly as George Grenville, the treasurer of the navy. George Grenville was brother-in-law of Pitt, and had always been reckoned one of Pitt's personal and political friends; but it is difficult to conceive two men of talents and integrity more utterly unlike each other. Pitt, as his sister often said, knew nothing accurately except Spenser's "Fairy Queen." He had never applied himself steadily to any branch of knowledge.

¹ Prince Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, appointed by George II. to the command of the allied forces in the Seven-Years' War. His most famous victory over the French was that at Minden in 1759. The efforts of France upon the Continent prevented her from attending properly to her interests elsewhere,—in India and in Canada. It was the well-known policy of Pitt to "conquer America in Germany."

He was a wretched financier. He never became familiar even with the rules of that House of which he was the brightest ornament. He had never studied public law as a system, and was, indeed, so ignorant of the whole subject, that George II. on one occasion complained bitterly that a man who had never read Vattel should presume to undertake the direction of foreign affairs.¹ But these defects were more than redeemed by high and rare gifts; by a strange power of inspiring great masses of men with confidence and affection; by an eloquence which not only delighted the ear, but stirred the blood, and brought tears into the eyes, by originality in devising plans, by vigor in executing them. Grenville, on the other hand, was by nature and habit a man of details. He had been bred a lawyer, and he had brought the industry and acuteness of the Temple² into official and parliamentary life. He was supposed to be intimately acquainted with the whole fiscal system of the country. He had paid especial attention to the law of Parliament, and was so learned in all things relating to the privileges and orders of the House of Commons that those who loved him least pronounced him the only person competent to succeed Onslow in the chair.³ His speeches were generally instructive, and sometimes, from the gravity and earnestness with which he spoke, even impressive, but never brilliant, and generally tedious. Indeed, even when he was at the head of affairs, he sometimes found it difficult to obtain the ear of the House. In disposition, as well as in intellect, he differed widely from his brother-in-law. Pitt was utterly regardless of money; he would scarcely stretch out his hand to take it; and when it came, he threw it away with childish profusion. Grenville, though strictly upright, was grasping and

¹ Vattel's *Law of Nations* was published in 1758. This work, from the pen of a contemporary who was also a German, would quite naturally be overestimated and overquoted by George II.

² The law-college, built on the site of a house of the Knights Templars of the middle ages.

³ As speaker of the House of Commons.

parsimonious. Pitt was a man of excitable nerves, sanguine in hope, easily elated by success and popularity, keenly sensible of injury, but prompt to forgive. Grenville's character was stern, melancholy, and pertinacious. Nothing was more remarkable in him than his inclination always to look on the dark side of things. He was the raven of the House of Commons, always croaking defeat in the midst of triumphs, and bankruptcy with an overflowing exchequer. Burke, with general applause, compared him, in a time of quiet and plenty, to the evil spirit whom Ovid described¹ looking down on the stately temples and wealthy haven of Athens, and scarce able to refrain from weeping because she could find nothing at which to weep. Such a man was not likely to be popular. But to unpopularity Grenville opposed a dogged determination, which sometimes forced even those who hated him to respect him.

It was natural that Pitt and Grenville, being such as they were, should take very different views of the situation of affairs. Pitt could see nothing but the trophies: Grenville could see nothing but the bill. Pitt boasted that England was victorious at once in America, in India, and in Germany, the umpire of the Continent, the mistress of the sea: Grenville cast up the subsidies, sighed over the army extraordinaries, and groaned in spirit to think that the nation had borrowed eight millions in one year.

With a ministry thus divided, it was not difficult for Bute to deal. Legge was the first who fell. He had given offense to the young King in the late reign by refusing to support a creature of Bute at a Hampshire election. He was now not only turned out, but in the closet,² when he delivered up his seal of office, was treated with gross incivility.

Pitt, who did not love Legge, saw this event with indifference. But the danger was now fast approaching himself. Charles III. of Spain had early conceived a deadly hatred of England. Twenty years before, when he was King of the Two Sicilies, he

¹ The reference is to *Metamorphoses*, ii. 794.

² The private council-chamber.

had been eager to join the coalition against Maria Theresa: but an English fleet had suddenly appeared in the Bay of Naples; an English captain had landed,¹ had proceeded to the palace, had laid a watch on the table, and had told his Majesty that within an hour a treaty of neutrality must be signed, or a bombardment would commence. The treaty was signed, the squadron sailed out of the bay twenty-four hours after it had sailed in, and from that day the ruling passion of the humbled prince was aversion to the English name. He was at length in a situation in which he might hope to gratify that passion. He had recently become King of Spain and the Indies.² He saw with envy and apprehension the triumphs of our navy, and the rapid extension of our colonial empire. He was a Bourbon, and sympathized with the distress of the house from which he sprang. He was a Spaniard; and no Spaniard could bear to see Gibraltar and Minorca in the possession of a foreign power. Impelled by such feelings, Charles concluded a secret treaty with France. By this treaty, known as the "Family Compact," the two powers bound themselves, not in express words, but by the clearest implication, to make war on England in common. Spain postponed the declaration of hostilities only till her fleet, laden with the treasures of America, should have arrived.

The existence of the treaty could not be kept a secret from Pitt. He acted as a man of his capacity and energy might be expected to act. He at once proposed to declare war against Spain, and to intercept the American fleet. He had determined, it is said, to attack without delay both Havana and the Philippines.

His wise and resolute counsel was rejected. Bute was foremost in opposing it, and was supported by almost the whole cabinet. Some of the ministers doubted, or affected to doubt, the

¹ Commodore Martin, in 1741.

² The Spanish West Indies were at this time taken to include not only the whole archipelago, but also Florida and the mainland from Mexico to Peru. Spain's East Indian possessions were relatively of little consequence.

correctness of Pitt's intelligence ; some shrank from the responsibility of advising a course so bold and decided as that which he proposed ; some were weary of his ascendancy, and were glad to be rid of him on any pretext. One only of his colleagues agreed with him,—his brother-in-law, Earl Temple.

Pitt and Temple resigned their offices. To Pitt the young King behaved at parting in the most gracious manner. Pitt, who, proud and fiery everywhere else, was always meek and humble in the closet, was moved even to tears. The King and the favorite urged him to accept some substantial mark of royal gratitude. Would he like to be appointed governor of Canada? A salary of five thousand pounds a year should be annexed to the office. Residence would not be required. It was true that the governor of Canada, as the law then stood, could not be a member of the House of Commons ; but a bill should be brought in, authorizing Pitt to hold his government together with a seat in Parliament, and in the preamble should be set forth his claims to the gratitude of his country. Pitt answered, with all delicacy, that his anxieties were rather for his wife and family than for himself, and that nothing would be so acceptable to him as a mark of royal goodness which might be beneficial to those who were dearest to him. The hint was taken. The same "Gazette"¹ which announced the retirement of the secretary of state announced also, that, in consideration of his great public services, his wife had been created a peeress in her own right, and that a pension of three thousand pounds a year, for three lives, had been bestowed on himself. It was doubtless thought that the rewards and honors conferred on the great minister would have a conciliatory effect on the public mind. Perhaps, too, it was thought that his popularity, which had partly arisen from the contempt which he had always shown for money, would be damaged by a pension ; and, indeed, a crowd of libels instantly appeared, in which he was accused of having sold his country. Many of his true friends

¹ The London Gazette is, and has been for two centuries, the official organ of the government.

thought that he would have best consulted the dignity of his character by refusing to accept any pecuniary reward from the Court. Nevertheless, the general opinion of his talents, virtues, and services remained unaltered. Addresses were presented to him from several large towns. London showed its admiration and affection in a still more marked manner. Soon after his resignation came the lord-mayor's day. The King and the royal family dined at Guildhall. Pitt was one of the guests. The young sovereign, seated by his bride in his state coach, received a remarkable lesson. He was scarcely noticed. All eyes were fixed on the fallen minister, all acclamations directed to him. The streets, the balconies, the chimney-tops, burst into a roar of delight as his chariot passed by. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs from the windows. The common people clung to the wheels, shook hands with the footmen, and even kissed the horses. Cries of "No Bute!" "No Newcastle salmon!"¹ were mingled with the shouts of "Pitt forever!" When Pitt entered Guildhall, he was welcomed by loud huzzas and clapping of hands, in which the very magistrates of the city joined. Lord Bute, in the mean time, was hooted and pelted through Cheapside, and would, it was thought, have been in some danger if he had not taken the precaution of surrounding his carriage with a strong body-guard of boxers. Many persons blamed the conduct of Pitt on this occasion as disrespectful to the King. Indeed, Pitt himself afterwards owned that he had done wrong. He was led into this error, as he was afterwards led into more serious errors, by the influence of his turbulent and mischievous brother-in-law, Temple.

The events which immediately followed Pitt's retirement raised his fame higher than ever. War with Spain proved to be, as he had predicted, inevitable. News came from the West Indies that Martinique had been taken by an expedition which he had

¹ This slur on Pitt's late colleague was merely a dull and contemptuous simile. The Tyne salmon-catch is the largest in England, and the name of Newcastle would easily suggest the phrase.

sent forth. Havana fell, and it was known that he had planned an attack on Havana. Manila capitulated, and it was believed that he had meditated a blow against Manila. The American fleet, which he had proposed to intercept, had unloaded an immense cargo of bullion in the haven of Cadiz, before Bute could be convinced that the Court of Madrid really entertained hostile intentions.

The session of Parliament which followed Pitt's retirement passed over without any violent storm. Lord Bute took on himself the most prominent part in the House of Lords. He had become secretary of state, and indeed prime-minister, without having once opened his lips in public, except as an actor. There was therefore no small curiosity to know how he would acquit himself. Members of the House of Commons crowded the bar of the Lords, and covered the steps of the throne. It was generally expected that the orator would break down, but his most malicious hearers were forced to own that he had made a better figure than they expected. They, indeed, ridiculed his action as theatrical, and his style as tumid. They were especially amused by the long pauses which, not from hesitation, but from affectation, he made at all the emphatic words; and Charles Townshend cried out, "Minute guns!" The general opinion, however, was, that, if Bute had been early practiced in debate, he might have become an impressive speaker.

In the Commons, George Grenville had been intrusted with the lead. The task was not as yet a very difficult one, for Pitt did not think fit to raise the standard of opposition. His speeches at this time were distinguished, not only by that eloquence in which he excelled all his rivals, but also by a temperance and a modesty which had too often been wanting to his character. When war was declared against Spain, he justly laid claim to the merit of having foreseen what had at length become manifest to all, but he carefully abstained from arrogant and acrimonious expressions; and this abstinence was the more honorable to him, because his temper, never very placid, was now severely tried,

both by gout and by calumny. The courtiers had adopted a mode of warfare which was soon turned with far more formidable effect against themselves. Half the inhabitants of the Grub Street garrets¹ paid their milk scores, and got their shirts out of pawn, by abusing Pitt. His German war, his subsidies, his pension, his wife's peerage, were shin of beef and gin, blankets and baskets of small coal, to the starving poetasters of the Fleet. Even in the House of Commons, he was, on one occasion during this session, assailed with an insolence and malice which called forth the indignation of men of all parties; but he endured the outrage with majestic patience. In his younger days he had been but too prompt to retaliate on those who attacked him; but now, conscious of his great services, and of the space which he filled in the eyes of all mankind, he would not stoop to personal squabbles. "This is no season," he said, in a debate on the Spanish war, "for altercation and recrimination. A day has arrived when every Englishman should stand forth for his country. Arm the whole; be one people; forget everything but the public. I set you the example. Harassed by slanderers, sinking under pain and disease, for the public I forget both my wrongs and my infirmities!" On a general review of his life, we are inclined to think that his genius and virtue never shone with so pure an effulgence as during the session of 1762.

The session drew towards the close; and Bute, emboldened by the acquiescence of the Houses, resolved to strike another great blow, and to become first minister in name as well as in reality. That coalition, which a few months before had seemed all-powerful, had been dissolved. The retreat of Pitt had deprived the government of popularity. Newcastle had exulted in the fall of the illustrious colleague whom he envied and dreaded, and had not foreseen that his own doom was at hand. He still tried to flatter himself that he was at the head of the government, but insults heaped on insults at length undeceived him. Places

¹ A street of London, now Milton Street, where lodged many literary hacks, penny-a-liners, and other writers of ephemeral literature.

which had always been considered as in his gift were bestowed without any reference to him. His expostulations only called forth significant hints that it was time for him to retire. One day he pressed on Bute the claims of a Whig prelate to the archbishopric of York. "If your grace thinks so highly of him," answered Bute, "I wonder that you did not promote him when you had the power." Still the old man clung with a desperate grasp to the wreck. Seldom, indeed, have Christian meekness and Christian humility equaled the meekness and humility of his patient and abject ambition. At length he was forced to understand that all was over. He quitted that court where he had held high office during forty-five years, and hid his shame and regret among the cedars of Claremont.¹ Bute became first lord of the treasury.

The favorite had undoubtedly committed a great error. It is impossible to imagine a tool better suited to his purposes than that which he thus threw away, or, rather, put into the hands of his enemies. If Newcastle had been suffered to play at being first minister, Bute might securely and quietly have enjoyed the substance of power. The gradual introduction of Tories into all the departments of the government might have been effected without any violent clamor, if the chief of the great Whig connection had been ostensibly at the head of affairs. This was strongly represented to Bute by Lord Mansfield,—a man who may justly be called the father of modern Toryism, of Toryism modified to suit an order of things under which the House of Commons is the most powerful body in the state. The theories which had dazzled Bute could not impose on the fine intellect of Mansfield. The temerity with which Bute provoked the hostility of powerful and deeply rooted interests was displeasing to Mansfield's cold and timid nature. Expostulation, however, was vain. Bute was impatient of advice, drunk with success, eager to be, in show as well as in reality, the head of the government. He had engaged in an undertaking in which a screen was absolutely

¹ Newcastle left office much poorer than when he entered it, refusing a proffered pension.

necessary to his success, and even to his safety. He found an excellent screen ready in the very place where it was most needed, and he rudely pushed it away.

And now the new system of government came into full operation. For the first time since the accession of the House of Hanover, the Tory party was in the ascendant. The prime-minister himself was a Tory. Lord Egremont, who had succeeded Pitt as secretary of state, was a Tory, and the son of a Tory. Sir Francis Dashwood, a man of slender parts, of small experience, and of notoriously immoral character, was made chancellor of the exchequer for no reason that could be imagined, except that he was a Tory, and had been a Jacobite. The royal household was filled with men whose favorite toast, a few years before, had been "the King over the water." The relative position of the two great national seats of learning was suddenly changed. The University of Oxford had long been the chief seat of disaffection. In troubled times the High Street had been lined with bayonets, the colleges had been searched by the King's messengers. Grave doctors were in the habit of talking very Ciceronian treason in the theater; and the undergraduates drank bumpers to Jacobite toasts, and chanted Jacobite airs. Of four successive chancellors of the university, one had notoriously been in the Pretender's service: the other three were fully believed to be in secret correspondence with the exiled family. Cambridge had therefore been especially favored by the Hanoverian princes, and had shown herself grateful for their patronage. George I. had enriched her library, George II. had contributed munificently to her Senate House. Bishoprics and deaneries were showered on her children. Her chancellor was Newcastle, the chief of the Whig aristocracy; her high steward was Hardwicke, the Whig head of the law. Both her burgesses had held office under the Whig ministry. Times had now changed. The University of Cambridge was received at St. James's with comparative coldness. The answers to the addresses of Oxford were all graciousness and warmth.

The watchwords of the new government were prerogative and purity. The sovereign was no longer to be a puppet in the hands of any subject, or of any combination of subjects. George III. would not be forced to take ministers whom he disliked, as his grandfather had been forced to take Pitt. George III. would not be forced to part with any whom he delighted to honor, as his grandfather had been forced to part with Carteret.¹ At the same time the system of bribery which had grown up during the late reigns was to cease. It was ostentatiously proclaimed, that, since the accession of the young King, neither constituents nor representatives had been bought with the secret-service money. To free Britain from corruption and oligarchical cabals, to detach her from continental connections, to bring the bloody and expensive war with France and Spain to a close,—such were the specious objects which Bute professed to procure.

Some of these objects he attained. England withdrew, at the cost of a deep stain on her faith, from her German connections. The war with France and Spain was terminated by a peace, honorable indeed and advantageous to our country, yet less honorable and less advantageous than might have been expected from a long and almost unbroken series of victories, by land and sea, in every part of the world. But the only effect of Bute's domestic administration was to make faction wilder, and corruption fouler, than ever.

The mutual animosity of the Whig and Tory parties had begun to languish after the fall of Walpole, and had seemed to be almost extinct at the close of the reign of George II. It now revived in all its force. Many Whigs, it is true, were still in office. The Duke of Bedford had signed the treaty with France. The Duke of Devonshire, though much out of humor, still con-

¹ Carteret (Earl Granville) was secretary of state under Walpole, who, jealous of his abilities and influence, forced his retirement in 1724. Eighteen years later Carteret overthrew Walpole, and himself returned to power. Chatham declared that he owed all that he was to the friendship and instruction of Carteret.

tinued to be lord-chamberlain. Grenville, who led the House of Commons, and Fox, who still enjoyed in silence the immense gains of the Pay Office, had always been regarded as strong Whigs. But the bulk of the party throughout the country regarded the new minister with abhorrence. There was, indeed, no want of popular themes for invective against his character. He was a favorite, and favorites have always been odious in this country. No mere favorite had been at the head of the government since the dagger of Felton had reached the heart of the Duke of Buckingham.¹ After that event the most arbitrary and the most frivolous of the Stuarts had felt the necessity of confiding the chief direction of affairs to men who had given some proof of parliamentary or official talent. Strafford, Falkland, Clarendon, Clifford, Shaftesbury, Lauderdale, Danby, Temple, Halifax, Rochester, Sunderland, whatever their faults might be, were all men of acknowledged ability. They did not owe their eminence merely to the favor of the sovereign. On the contrary, they owed the favor of the sovereign to their eminence. Most of them, indeed, had first attracted the notice of the Court by the capacity and vigor which they had shown in opposition. The Revolution seemed to have forever secured the state against the domination of a Carr² or a Villiers. Now, however, the personal regard of the King had at once raised a man who had seen nothing of public business, who had never opened his lips in Parliament, over the heads of a crowd of eminent orators, financiers, diplomatists. From a private gentleman, this fortunate minion had at once been turned into a secretary of state. He had made his maiden speech when at the head of the administration. The vulgar resorted to a simple explanation of the phenomenon, and the coarsest ribaldry against the princess mother was scrawled on every wall and sung in every alley.

¹ Buckingham, referred to below as Villiers, was a personal favorite both of James I. and of his son. John Felton assassinated him in 1628 on pretense of zeal for the public welfare, but in reality to satisfy a private enmity.

² Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, an early favorite of James I.

This was not all. The spirit of party, roused by impolitic provocation from its long sleep, roused in turn a still fiercer and more malignant Fury,—the spirit of national animosity. The grudge of Whig against Tory was mingled with the grudge of Englishman against Scot. The two sections of the great British people had not yet been indissolubly blended together. The events of 1715 and of 1745 had left painful and enduring traces. The tradesmen of Cornhill had been in dread of seeing their tills and warehouses plundered by barelegged mountaineers from the Grampians. They still recollected that Black Friday, when the news came that the rebels were at Derby,¹ when all the shops in the city were closed, and when the Bank of England began to pay in sixpences.² The Scots, on the other hand, remembered, with natural resentment, the severity with which the insurgents had been chastised, the military outrages, the humiliating laws,³ the heads fixed on Temple Bar, the fires and quartering blocks on Kennington Common. The favorite did not suffer the English to forget from what part of the island he came. The cry of all the south was that the public offices, the army, the navy, were filled with high-checked Drummonds and Erskines, Macdonalds and Macgillivrays, who could not talk a Christian tongue, and some of whom had but lately begun to wear Christian breeches. All the old jokes on hills without trees, girls without stockings, men eating the food of horses, pails emptied from the fourteenth story, were pointed against these lucky adventurers. To the honor of the Scots, it must be said that their prudence and their pride restrained them from retaliation. Like the princess in the Arabian tale, they stopped their ears tight, and, unmoved by the

¹ Dec. 4, 1745.

² An expedient to gain time to effect measures for averting the run upon the bank. Payments were made in shillings and sixpences. The principal London merchants agreed to receive notes in lieu of gold, and this ended the panic.

³ Especially those prohibiting to the Highland Scots the use of arms and the wearing of their distinctive costumes.

shrillest notes of abuse, walked on, without once looking round, straight towards the Golden Fountain.

Bute, who had always been considered as a man of taste and reading, affected, from the moment of his elevation, the character of a Mæcenas.¹ If he expected to conciliate the public by encouraging literature and art, he was grievously mistaken. Indeed, none of the objects of his munificence, with the single exception of Johnson, can be said to have been well selected; and the public, not unnaturally, ascribed the selection of Johnson rather to the doctor's political prejudices than to his literary merits:² for a wretched scribbler named Shebbeare, who had nothing in common with Johnson except violent Jacobitism, and who had stood in the pillory for a libel on the Revolution, was honored with a mark of royal approbation similar to that which was bestowed on the author of the "English Dictionary" and of the "Vanity of Human Wishes." It was remarked that Adam, a Scotchman, was the court architect, and that Ramsay, a Scotchman, was the court painter, and was preferred to Reynolds. Mallet, a Scotchman, of no high literary fame, and of infamous character, partook largely of the liberality of the government. John Home, a Scotchman, was rewarded for the tragedy of "Douglas" both with a pension and with a sinecure place. But when the author³ of the "Bard" and of the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" ventured to ask for a professorship, the emoluments of which he much needed, and for the duties of which he was in many respects better qualified than any man living, he was refused; and the post was bestowed on the pedagogue under whose care the favorite's son-in-law, Sir James Lowther, had made such signal proficiency in the graces and in the humane virtues.

¹ Caius Cilnius Mæcenas was a Roman statesman, and patron of literature and the fine arts, in the first century B.C.

² This "public" could hardly be expected to recall that Johnson regarded the reigning family as usurpers, or to reflect that he had never concealed his prejudice against the compatriots of Bute.

³ Thomas Gray, 1716-71.

Thus, the first lord of the treasury was detested by many as a Tory, by many as a favorite, and by many as a Scot. All the hatred which flowed from these various sources soon mingled, and was directed in one torrent of obloquy against the treaty of peace. The Duke of Bedford, who had negotiated that treaty, was hooted through the streets. Bute was attacked in his chair, and was with difficulty rescued by a troop of the guards. He could hardly walk the streets in safety without disguising himself. A gentleman who died not many years ago used to say that he once recognized the favorite earl in the piazza of Covent Garden, muffled in a large coat, and with a hat and wig drawn down over his brows. His lordship's established type with the mob was a jack-boot, a wretched pun on his Christian name¹ and title. A jack-boot, generally accompanied by a petticoat, was sometimes fastened on a gallows, and sometimes committed to the flames. Libels on the Court, exceeding in audacity and rancor any that had been published for many years, now appeared daily both in prose and verse. Wilkes, with lively insolence, compared the mother of George III. to the mother of Edward III., and the Scotch minister to the gentle Mortimer.² Churchill, with all the energy of hatred, deplored the fate of his country, invaded by a new race of savages, more cruel and ravenous than the Picts or the Danes, the poor, proud children of leprosy³ and hunger. It is a slight circumstance, but deserves to be recorded, that in this year pamphleteers first ventured to print at length the names of the great men whom they lampooned. George II. had always been the K——. His ministers had been Sir R—— W——, Mr. P——, and the Duke of N——. But the libelers of George

¹ *John* Stuart.

² Isabella, mother of Edward III., was the wife of Edward II. Her intrigue with Roger Mortimer involved the murder of her husband in 1327, and Mortimer's execution in the reign of her son.

³ Leprosy appeared in Britain while it was a Roman colony, became epidemic in Europe during the crusades, but began to decline in the fifteenth century. The disease lingered in the Shetland Isles till about a hundred years ago.

III., of the princess mother, and of Lord Bute, did not give quarter to a single vowel.

It was supposed that Lord Temple secretly encouraged the most scurrilous assailants of the government. In truth, those who knew his habits tracked him as men track a mole. It was his nature to grub underground. Whenever a heap of dirt was flung up, it might well be suspected that he was at work in some foul crooked labyrinth below. Pitt turned away from the filthy work of opposition with the same scorn with which he had turned away from the filthy work of government. He had the magnanimity to proclaim everywhere the disgust which he felt at the insults offered by his own adherents to the Scottish nation, and missed no opportunity of extolling the courage and fidelity which the Highland regiments had displayed through the whole war. But, though he disdained to use any but lawful and honorable weapons, it was well known that his fair blows were likely to be far more formidable than the privy thrusts of his brother-in-law's stiletto.

Bute's heart began to fail him. The Houses were about to meet. The treaty would instantly be the subject of discussion. It was probable that Pitt, the great Whig connection, and the multitude, would all be on the same side. The favorite had professed to hold in abhorrence those means by which preceding ministers had kept the House of Commons in good humor. He now began to think that he had been too scrupulous. His Utopian visions were at an end. It was necessary not only to bribe, but to bribe more shamelessly and flagitiously than his predecessors, in order to make up for lost time. A majority must be secured, no matter by what means. Could Grenville do this? Would he do it? His firmness and ability had not yet been tried in any perilous crisis. He had been generally regarded as a humble follower of his brother Temple, and of his brother-in-law Pitt, and was supposed, though with little reason, to be still favorably inclined towards them. Other aid must be called in; and where was other aid to be found?

There was one man, whose sharp and manly logic had often in debate been found a match for the lofty and impassioned rhetoric of Pitt, whose talents for jobbing were not inferior to his talents for debate, whose dauntless spirit shrank from no difficulty or danger, and who was as little troubled with scruples as with fears. Henry Fox, or nobody, could weather the storm which was about to burst. Yet was he a person to whom the Court, even in that extremity, was unwilling to have recourse. He had always been regarded as a Whig of the Whigs. He had been the friend and disciple of Walpole. He had long been connected by close ties with William, Duke of Cumberland.¹ By the Tories he was more hated than any man living. So strong was their aversion to him, that when, in the late reign, he had attempted to form a party against the Duke of Newcastle, they had thrown all their weight into Newcastle's scale. By the Scots, Fox was abhorred as the confidential friend of the conqueror of Culloden. He was, on personal grounds, most obnoxious to the princess mother; for he had, immediately after her husband's death, advised the late King to take the education of her son, the heir-apparent, entirely out of her hands. He had recently given, if possible, still deeper offense; for he had indulged, not without some ground, the ambitious hope that his beautiful sister-in-law, the Lady Sarah Lennox, might be Queen of England. It had been observed that the King at one time rode every morning by the grounds of Holland House,² and that on such occasions Lady Sarah, dressed like a shepherdess at a masquerade, was making hay close to the road, which was then separated by no wall from the lawn. On

¹ The King's uncle, and victor at Culloden, April 16, 1746 (see pp. 71, 72).

² Holland House owed its name to the first Earl of Holland, and in turn gave its name as a title to Henry Fox when he became the first Lord Holland. It had been at one time the home of Addison. The third Lord Holland, nephew to Charles James Fox, restored the house, and made it the meeting-place of statesmen, artists, and men of letters. Sydney Smith was here a familiar guest; and by a confusion of names and associations Lord Holland is often referred to as Smith's son-in-law. Sydney Smith's daughter was wife to Sir Henry Holland, the distinguished physician.

account of the part which Fox had taken in this singular love-affair, he was the only member of the privy council who was not summoned to the meeting at which his Majesty announced his intended marriage with the Princess of Mecklenburg. Of all the statesmen of the age, therefore, it seemed that Fox was the last with whom Bute, the Tory, the Scot, the favorite of the princess mother, could, under any circumstances, act. Yet to Fox, Bute was now compelled to apply.

Fox had many noble and amiable qualities, which in private life shone forth in full luster, and made him dear to his children, to his dependants, and to his friends; but as a public man he had no title to esteem. In him the vices which were common to the whole school of Walpole appeared, not perhaps in their worst, but certainly in their most prominent form; for his parliamentary and official talents made all his faults conspicuous. His courage, his vehement temper, his contempt for appearances, led him to display much that others, quite as unscrupulous as himself, covered with a decent veil. He was the most unpopular of the statesmen of his time, not because he sinned more than many of them, but because he canted less.

He felt his unpopularity; but he felt it after the fashion of strong minds. He became, not cautious, but reckless, and faced the rage of the whole nation with a scowl of inflexible defiance. He was born with a sweet and generous temper; but he had been goaded and baited into a savageness which was not natural to him, and which amazed and shocked those who knew him best. Such was the man to whom Bute, in extreme need, applied for succor.

That succor Fox was not unwilling to afford. Though by no means of an envious temper, he had undoubtedly contemplated the success and popularity of Pitt with bitter mortification. He thought himself Pitt's match as a debater, and Pitt's superior as a man of business. They had long been regarded as well-paired rivals. They had started fair in the career of ambition. They had long run side by side. At length Fox had taken the lead,

and Pitt had fallen behind. Then had come a sudden turn of fortune, like that in Virgil's foot-race.¹ Fox had stumbled in the mire, and had not only been defeated, but befouled. Pitt had reached the goal, and received the prize. The emoluments of the Pay Office might induce the defeated statesman to submit in silence to the ascendancy of his competitor, but could not satisfy a mind conscious of great powers, and sore from great vexations. As soon, therefore, as a party arose adverse to the war and to the supremacy of the great war minister, the hopes of Fox began to revive. His feuds with the princess mother, with the Scots, with the Tories, he was ready to forget, if, by the help of his old enemies, he could now regain the importance which he had lost, and confront Pitt on equal terms.

The alliance was therefore soon concluded. Fox was assured, that, if he would pilot the government out of its embarrassing situation, he should be rewarded with a peerage, of which he had long been desirous. He undertook on his side to obtain, by fair or foul means, a vote in favor of the peace. In consequence of this arrangement he became leader of the House of Commons; and Grenville, stifling his vexation as well as he could, sullenly acquiesced in the change.

Fox had expected that his influence would secure to the Court the cordial support of some eminent Whigs who were his personal friends, particularly of the Duke of Cumberland and of the Duke of Devonshire. He was disappointed, and soon found, that, in addition to all his other difficulties, he must reckon on the opposition of the ablest prince of the blood, and of the great house of Cavendish.²

But he had pledged himself to win the battle; and he was not

¹ *Æneid*, Book V. Macaulay's references to the classics are always apposite enough, but often, as here, trite and academic.

² That is, of the two noblemen just named. This artifice, of repetition in another form, is one of which Macaulay is very fond, generally using it for purposes of rhythm and to close a period (compare *Murray* . . . *Mansfield*, p. 103).

a man to go back. It was no time for squeamishness. Bute was made to comprehend that the ministry could be saved only by practicing the tactics of Walpole to an extent at which Walpole himself would have stared. The Pay Office was turned into a mart for votes. Hundreds of members were closeted there with Fox, and, as there is too much reason to believe, departed carrying with them the wages of infamy. It was affirmed by persons who had the best opportunities of obtaining information, that twenty-five thousand pounds were thus paid away in a single morning. The lowest bribe given, it was said, was a bank note for two hundred pounds.

Intimidation was joined with corruption. All ranks, from the highest to the lowest, were to be taught that the King would be obeyed. The lords-lieutenants of several counties were dismissed. The Duke of Devonshire was especially singled out as the victim by whose fate the magnates of England were to take warning. His wealth, rank, and influence, his stainless private character, and the constant attachment of his family to the House of Hanover, did not secure him from gross personal indignity. It was known that he disapproved of the course which the government had taken; and it was accordingly determined to humble the Prince of the Whigs, as he had been nicknamed by the princess mother. He went to the palace to pay his duty. "Tell him," said the King to a page, "that I will not see him." The page hesitated. "Go to him," said the King, "and tell him those very words." The message was delivered. The duke tore off his gold key,¹ and went away boiling with anger. His relations who were in office instantly resigned. A few days later the King called for the list of privy councilors, and with his own hand struck out the duke's name.

In this step there was at least courage, though little wisdom or good nature. But as nothing was too high for the revenge of the Court, so also was nothing too low. A persecution such as had never been known before, and has never been known since,

¹ Badge of office of the lord-chamberlain.

raged in every public department. Great numbers of humble and laborious clerks were deprived of their bread, not because they had neglected their duties, not because they had taken an active part against the ministry, but merely because they had owed their situations to the recommendation of some nobleman or gentleman who was against the peace. The proscription extended to tidewaiters, to gaugers, to doorkeepers. One poor man to whom a pension had been given for his gallantry in a fight with smugglers was deprived of it because he had been befriended by the Duke of Grafton. An aged widow, who, on account of her husband's services in the navy, had many years before been made housekeeper to a public office, was dismissed from her situation because it was imagined that she was distantly connected by marriage with the Cavendish family. The public clamor, as may well be supposed, grew daily louder and louder; but the louder it grew, the more resolutely did Fox go on with the work which he had begun. His old friends could not conceive what had possessed him. "I could forgive," said the Duke of Cumberland, "Fox's political vagaries; but I am quite confounded by his inhumanity. Surely he used to be the best-natured of men."

At last Fox went so far as to take a legal opinion on the question whether the patents¹ granted by George II. were binding on George III. It is said, that, if his colleagues had not flinched, he would at once have turned out the tellers of the exchequer and justices in eyre.²

Meanwhile the Parliament met. The ministers, more hated by the people than ever, were secure of a majority; and they had also reason to hope that they would have the advantage in the debates as well as in the divisions, for Pitt was confined to his chamber by a severe attack of gout. His friends moved to defer the consideration of the treaty till he should be able to attend,

¹ That is, all appointments important enough to require the royal signature.

² Offices that required expert ability in their incumbents.

but the motion was rejected. The great day arrived.¹ The discussion had lasted some time, when a loud huzza was heard in Palace Yard. The noise came nearer and nearer, up the stairs, through the lobby. The door opened, and from the midst of a shouting multitude came forth Pitt, borne in the arms of his attendants. His face was thin and ghastly, his limbs swathed in flannel, his crutch in his hand. The bearers set him down within the bar. His friends instantly surrounded him, and with their help he crawled to his seat near the table. In this condition he spoke three hours and a half against the peace. During that time he was repeatedly forced to sit down and to use cordials. It may well be supposed that his voice was faint, that his action was languid, and that his speech, though occasionally brilliant and impressive, was feeble when compared with his best oratorical performances; but those who remembered what he had done, and who saw what he suffered, listened to him with emotions stronger than any that mere eloquence can produce. He was unable to stay for the division, and was carried away from the House amidst shouts as loud as those which had announced his arrival.

A large majority approved the peace. The exultation of the Court was boundless. "Now," exclaimed the princess mother, "my son is really King." The young sovereign spoke of himself as freed from the bondage in which his grandfather had been held. On one point, it was announced, his mind was unalterably made up: under no circumstances whatever should those Whig grandees who had enslaved his predecessors, and endeavored to enslave himself, be restored to power.

This vaunting was premature. The real strength of the favorite was by no means proportioned to the number of votes which he had, on one particular division, been able to command. He was soon again in difficulties. The most important part of his budget was a tax on cider. This measure was opposed not only

¹ December, 1762. The treaty of peace was signed at Paris in the following February.

by those who were generally hostile to his administration, but also by many of his supporters. The name of excise had always been hateful to the Tories. One of the chief crimes of Walpole, in their eyes, had been his partiality for this mode of raising money. The Tory Johnson had in his "Dictionary" given so scurrilous a definition of the word "excise,"¹ that the commissioners of excise had seriously thought of prosecuting him. The counties which the new impost particularly affected had always been Tory counties. It was the boast of John Philips, the poet of the English vintage, that the cider-land² had ever been faithful to the throne, and that all the pruning-hooks of her thousand orchards had been beaten into swords for the service of the ill-fated Stuarts. The effect of Bute's fiscal scheme was to produce a union between the gentry and yeomanry of the cider-land and the Whigs of the capital. Herefordshire and Worcestershire were in a flame. The city of London, though not so directly interested, was, if possible, still more excited. The debates on this question irreparably damaged the government. Dashwood's financial statement had been confused and absurd beyond belief, and had been received by the House with roars of laughter. He had sense enough to be conscious of his unfitness for the high situation which he held, and exclaimed in a comical fit of despair, "What shall I do? The boys will point at me in the street, and cry, 'There goes the worst chancellor of the exchequer that ever was.'" George Grenville came to the rescue, and spoke strongly on his favorite theme,—the profusion with which the late war had been carried on. That profusion, he said, had made taxes necessary. He called on the gentlemen opposite to him to say where they would have a tax laid, and dwelt on this topic with his usual prolixity. "Let them tell me where," he repeated in a monotonous and somewhat fretful tone. "I say, sir, let them tell

¹ Johnson's definition was "a hateful tax levied on commodities, and adjudged, not by the common judges of property, but by wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid."

² The English counties where much cider was made.

me where. I repeat it, sir: I am entitled to say to them, 'Tell me where.'" Unluckily for him, Pitt had come down to the House that night, and had been bitterly provoked by the reflections thrown on the war. He revenged himself by murmuring, in a whine resembling Grenville's, a line of a well-known song, "Gentle Shepherd, tell me where." "If," cried Grenville, "gentlemen are to be treated in this way" — Pitt, as was his fashion, when he meant to mark extreme contempt, rose deliberately, made his bow, and walked out of the House, leaving his brother-in-law in convulsions of rage, and everybody else in convulsions of laughter. It was long before Grenville lost the nickname of the Gentle Shepherd.

But the ministry had vexations still more serious to endure. The hatred which the Tories and Scots bore to Fox was implacable. In a moment of extreme peril they had consented to put themselves under his guidance; but the aversion with which they regarded him broke forth as soon as the crisis seemed to be over. Some of them attacked him about the accounts of the Pay Office. Some of them rudely interrupted him, when speaking, by laughter and ironical cheers. He was naturally desirous to escape from so disagreeable a situation, and demanded the peerage which had been promised as the reward of his services.

It was clear that there must be some change in the composition of the ministry; but scarcely any, even of those who from their situation might be supposed to be in all the secrets of the government, anticipated what really took place. To the amazement of the Parliament and the nation, it was suddenly announced that Bute had resigned.

Twenty different explanations of this strange step were suggested. Some attributed it to profound design, and some to sudden panic. Some said that the lampoons of the opposition had driven the earl from the field; some, that he had taken office only in order to bring the war to a close, and had always meant to retire when that object had been accomplished. He publicly assigned ill health as his reason for quitting business, and privately

complained that he was not cordially seconded by his colleagues, and that Lord Mansfield in particular, whom he had himself brought into the cabinet, gave him no support in the House of Peers. Mansfield was, indeed, far too sagacious not to perceive that Bute's situation was one of great peril, and far too timorous to thrust himself into peril for the sake of another. The probability, however, is, that Bute's conduct on this occasion, like the conduct of most men on most occasions, was determined by mixed motives. We suspect that he was sick of office; for this is a feeling much more common among ministers than persons who see public life from a distance are disposed to believe; and nothing could be more natural than that this feeling should take possession of the mind of Bute. In general, a statesman climbs by slow degrees. Many laborious years elapse before he reaches the topmost pinnacle of preferment. In the earlier part of his career, therefore, he is constantly lured on by seeing something above him. During his ascent he gradually becomes inured to the annoyances which belong to a life of ambition. By the time that he has attained the highest point, he has become patient of labor and callous to abuse. He is kept constant to his vocation, in spite of all its discomforts, at first by hope, and at last by habit. It was not so with Bute. His whole public life lasted little more than two years. On the day on which he became a politician he became a cabinet minister. In a few months he was, both in name and in show, chief of the administration. Greater than he had been he could not be. If what he already possessed was vanity and vexation of spirit, no delusion remained to entice him onward. He had been cloyed with the pleasures of ambition before he had been seasoned to its pains. His habits had not been such as were likely to fortify his mind against obloquy and public hatred. He had reached his forty-eighth year in dignified ease, without knowing, by personal experience, what it was to be ridiculed and slandered. All at once, without any previous initiation, he had found himself exposed to such a storm of invective and satire as had never burst on the head of any states-

man. The emoluments of office were now nothing to him, for he had just succeeded to a princely property by the death of his father-in-law.¹ All the honors which could be bestowed on him he had already secured. He had obtained the Garter² for himself, and a British peerage for his son.³ He seems also to have imagined that by quitting the treasury he should escape from danger and abuse without really resigning power, and should still be able to exercise in private supreme influence over the royal mind.

Whatever may have been his motives, he retired. Fox at the same time took refuge in the House of Lords; and George Grenville became first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer.

We believe that those who made this arrangement fully intended that Grenville should be a mere puppet in the hands of Bute, for Grenville was as yet very imperfectly known even to those who had observed him long. He passed for a mere official drudge; and he had all the industry, the minute accuracy, the formality, the tediousness, which belong to the character. But he had other qualities which had not yet shown themselves,—devouring ambition, dauntless courage, self-confidence amounting to presumption, and a temper which could not endure opposition. He was not disposed to be anybody's tool; and he had no attachment, political or personal, to Bute. The two men had, indeed, nothing in common, except a strong propensity towards harsh and unpopular courses. Their principles were fundamentally different. Bute was a Tory. Grenville would have been very angry with any person who should have denied his claim to be a Whig. He was more prone to tyrannical measures than Bute, but he loved tyranny only when disguised under the forms of constitu-

¹ Bute married the daughter of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. The "princely property" consisted of the Wortley estates.

² The Order of the Garter, established by Edward III., is the highest order of knighthood in Great Britain.

³ Lord Mountstuart, first Marquis of Bute.

tional liberty. He mixed up, after a fashion then not very unusual, the theories of the republicans of the seventeenth century with the technical maxims of English law, and thus succeeded in combining anarchical speculation with arbitrary practice. The voice of the people was the voice of God, but the only legitimate organ through which the voice of the people could be uttered was the Parliament. All power was from the people, but to the Parliament the whole power of the people had been delegated. No Oxonian divine had ever, even in the years which immediately followed the Restoration,¹ demanded for the King so abject, so unreasoning, a homage, as Grenville, on what he considered as the purest Whig principles, demanded for the Parliament. As he wished to see the Parliament despotic over the nation, so he wished to see it also despotic over the Court. In his view, the prime-minister, possessed of the confidence of the House of Commons, ought to be mayor of the palace. The King was a mere Childeric or Chilperic,² who might well think himself lucky in being permitted to enjoy such handsome apartments at St. James's, and so fine a park at Windsor.

Thus the opinions of Bute and those of Grenville were diametrically opposed. Nor was there any private friendship between the two statesmen. Grenville's nature was not forgiving; and he well remembered how, a few months before, he had been compelled to yield the lead of the House of Commons to Fox.

We are inclined to think, on the whole, that the worst administration which has governed England since the Revolution was that of George Grenville. His public acts may be classed under two heads,—outrages on the liberty of the people, and outrages on the dignity of the Crown.

He began by making war on the press. John Wilkes, member of Parliament for Aylesbury, was singled out for persecution.

¹ That is, of the Stuarts, in 1660, after the period of the Commonwealth.

² These were Frankish kings of the fifth and sixth centuries, who were mere puppets of the great land-owners. The real chief of state, appointed at the dictation of the latter, was called "mayor of the palace."

Wilkes had till very lately been known chiefly as one of the most profane, licentious, and agreeable rakes about town. He was a man of taste, reading, and engaging manners. His sprightly conversation was the delight of greenrooms and taverns, and pleased even grave hearers when he was sufficiently under restraint to abstain from detailing the particulars of his amours, and from breaking jests on the New Testament. His expensive debaucheries forced him to have recourse to the Jews. He was soon a ruined man, and determined to try his chance as a political adventurer. In Parliament he did not succeed. His speaking, though pert, was feeble, and by no means interested his hearers so much as to make them forget his face, which was so hideous that the caricaturists were forced, in their own despite, to flatter him. As a writer, he made a better figure. He set up a weekly paper called the "North Briton." This journal, written with some pleasantry, and great audacity and impudence, had a considerable number of readers. Forty-four numbers had been published when Bute resigned; and, though almost every number had contained matter grossly libelous, no prosecution had been instituted. The forty-fifth number was innocent when compared with the majority of those which had preceded it, and indeed contained nothing so strong as may in our time be found daily in the leading articles of the "Times" and "Morning Chronicle." But Grenville was now at the head of affairs. A new spirit had been infused into the administration. Authority was to be upheld. The government was no longer to be braved with impunity. Wilkes was arrested under a general warrant,¹ conveyed to the Tower, and confined there with circumstances of unusual severity. His papers were seized, and carried to the secretary of state. These harsh and illegal measures produced a violent outbreak of popular rage, which was soon changed to delight and exultation. The arrest was pronounced unlawful by the Court

¹ Under the form of "writs of assistance," these warrants had much to do with bringing about the Revolution of 1776. The Fourth Amendment to our Constitution was framed against this kind of writ (see p. 86).

of Common Pleas, in which Chief Justice Pratt¹ presided, and the prisoner was discharged. This victory over the government was celebrated with enthusiasm both in London and in the cider counties.

While the ministers were daily becoming more odious to the nation, they were doing their best to make themselves also odious to the Court. They gave the King plainly to understand that they were determined not to be Lord Bute's creatures, and exacted a promise that no secret adviser should have access to the royal ear. They soon found reason to suspect that this promise had not been observed. They remonstrated in terms less respectful than their master had been accustomed to hear, and gave him a fortnight to make his choice between his favorite and his cabinet.

George III. was greatly disturbed. He had but a few weeks before exulted in his deliverance from the yoke of the great Whig connection. He had even declared that his honor would not permit him ever again to admit the members of that connection into his service. He now found that he had only exchanged one set of masters for another set still harsher and more imperious. In his distress he thought on Pitt. From Pitt it was possible that better terms might be obtained than either from Grenville or from the party of which Newcastle was the head.

Grenville, on his return from an excursion into the country, repaired to Buckingham House.² He was astonished to find at the entrance a chair, the shape of which was well known to him, and indeed to all London. It was distinguished by a large boot, made for the purpose of accommodating the Great Commoner's gouty leg. Grenville guessed the whole. His brother-in-law was closeted with the King. Bute, provoked by what he considered

¹ This man is better known as Lord Camden. He was a friend of Franklin, and concerned with him in the treaty of peace, 1783.

² The royal residence. The present Buckingham Palace stands upon its site. As Thackeray expressed it, "George III. and his queen lived in a very unpretending but elegant-looking house, on the site of the hideous pile under which his grand-daughter at present reposes."

as the unfriendly and ungrateful conduct of his successors, had himself proposed that Pitt should be summoned to the palace.

Pitt had two audiences on two successive days. What passed at the first interview led him to expect that the negotiation would be brought to a satisfactory close, but on the morrow he found the King less complying. The best account, indeed the only trustworthy account, of the conference, is that which was taken from Pitt's own mouth by Lord Hardwicke. It appears that Pitt strongly represented the importance of conciliating those chiefs of the Whig party who had been so unhappy as to incur the royal displeasure. They had, he said, been the most constant friends of the House of Hanover. Their power was great; they had been long versed in public business. If they were to be under sentence of exclusion, a solid administration could not be formed. His Majesty could not bear to think of putting himself into the hands of those whom he had recently chased from his court with the strongest marks of anger. "I am sorry, Mr. Pitt," he said, "but I see this will not do. My honor is concerned. I must support my honor." How his Majesty succeeded in supporting his honor, we shall soon see.

Pitt retired, and the King was reduced to request the ministers, whom he had been on the point of discarding, to remain in office. During the two years which followed, Grenville, now closely leagued with the Bedfords, was the master of the Court; and a hard master he proved. He knew that he was kept in place only because there was no choice except between himself and the Whigs. That under any circumstances the Whigs would be forgiven, he thought impossible. The late attempt to get rid of him had roused his resentment: the failure of that attempt had liberated him from all fear. He had never been very courtly. He now began to hold a language, to which, since the days of Cornet Joyce and President Bradshaw,¹ no English king had been compelled to listen.

¹ Bradshaw presided at the trial of Charles I. Joyce was leader of the agitators who carried off Charles from the parliamentary commission in 1647.

In one matter, indeed, Grenville, at the expense of justice and liberty, gratified the passions of the Court while gratifying his own. The persecution of Wilkes was eagerly pressed. He had written a parody on Pope's "Essay on Man," entitled the "Essay on Woman," and had appended to it notes, in ridicule of Warburton's famous "Commentary."¹ This composition was exceedingly profligate, but not more so, we think, than some of Pope's own works, the imitation of the second satire of the first book of Horace, for example; and, to do Wilkes justice, he had not, like Pope, given his ribaldry to the world. He had merely printed at a private press a very small number of copies, which he meant to present to some of his boon companions, whose morals were in no more danger of being corrupted by a loose book than a negro of being tanned by a warm sun. A tool of the government, by giving a bribe to the printer, procured a copy of this trash, and placed it in the hands of the ministers. The ministers resolved to visit Wilkes's offense against decorum with the utmost rigor of the law. What share piety and respect for morals had in dictating this resolution, our readers may judge from the fact that no person was more eager for bringing the libertine poet to punishment than Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry. On the first day of the session of Parliament, the book, thus disgracefully obtained, was laid on the table of the Lords by the Earl of Sandwich, whom the Duke of Bedford's interest had made secretary of state. The unfortunate author had not the slightest suspicion that his licentious poem had ever been seen, except by his printer and by a few of his dissipated companions, till it was produced in full Parliament. Though he was a man of easy temper, averse from danger, and not very susceptible of shame, the surprise, the disgrace, the prospect of utter ruin, put him beside himself. He picked a quarrel with one of Lord Bute's dependants, fought a duel, was seriously wounded, and, when half recovered, fled to France. His enemies had now

¹ Warburton, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, wrote an approving commentary on Pope's Essay.

their own way, both in the Parliament and in the King's Bench. He was censured, expelled from the House of Commons, outlawed. His works were ordered to be burned by the common hangman. Yet was the multitude still true to him. In the minds even of many moral and religious men, his crime seemed light when compared with the crime of his accusers. The conduct of Sandwich, in particular, excited universal disgust. His own vices were notorious; and, only a fortnight before he laid the "Essay on Woman" before the House of Lords, he had been drinking and singing loose catches with Wilkes at one of the most dissolute clubs in London. Shortly after the meeting of Parliament, the "Beggar's Opera" was acted at Covent Garden Theater. When Macheath uttered the words, "That Jemmy Twitcher should peach me I own surprised me," pit, boxes, and galleries burst into a roar which seemed likely to bring the roof down. From that day Sandwich was universally known by the nickname of "Jemmy Twitcher." The ceremony of burning the "North Briton" was interrupted by a riot. The constables were beaten; the paper was rescued; and, instead of it, a jack-boot and a petticoat were committed to the flames. Wilkes had instituted an action for the seizure of his papers against the undersecretary of state. The jury gave a thousand pounds damages. But neither these nor any other indications of public feeling had power to move Grenville. He had the Parliament with him; and, according to his political creed, the sense of the nation was to be collected from the Parliament alone.

Soon, however, he found reason to fear that even the Parliament might fail him. On the question of the legality of general warrants, the opposition, having on its side all sound principles, all constitutional authorities, and the voice of the whole nation, mustered in great force, and was joined by many who did not ordinarily vote against the government. On one occasion the ministry, in a very full House, had a majority of only fourteen votes. The storm, however, blew over. The spirit of the opposition, from whatever cause, began to flag at the moment when

success seemed almost certain. The session ended without any change. Pitt, whose eloquence had shone with its usual luster in all the principal debates, and whose popularity was greater than ever, was still a private man. Grenville, detested alike by the Court and by the people, was still minister.

As soon as the Houses had risen, Grenville took a step which proved, even more signally than any of his past acts, how despotic, how acrimonious, and how fearless his nature was. Among the gentlemen not ordinarily opposed to the government, who, on the great constitutional question of general warrants, had voted with the minority, was Henry Conway, brother of the Earl of Hertford, — a brave soldier, a tolerable speaker, and a well-meaning though not a wise or vigorous politician. He was now deprived of his regiment, the merited reward of faithful and gallant service in two wars. It was confidently asserted that in this violent measure the King heartily concurred.

But whatever pleasure the persecution of Wilkes, or the dismissal of Conway, may have given to the royal mind, it is certain that his Majesty's aversion to his ministers increased day by day. Grenville was as frugal of the public money as of his own, and morosely refused to accede to the King's request that a few thousand pounds might be expended in buying some open fields to the west of the gardens of Buckingham House. In consequence of this refusal, the fields were soon covered with buildings, and the King and Queen were overlooked in their most private walks by the upper windows of a hundred houses. Nor was this the worst. Grenville was as liberal of words as he was sparing of guineas. Instead of explaining himself in that clear, concise, and lively manner which alone could win the attention of a young mind new to business, he spoke in the closet just as he spoke in the House of Commons. When he had harangued two hours, he looked at his watch, as he had been in the habit of looking at the clock opposite the speaker's chair, apologized for the length of his discourse, and then went on for an hour more. The members of the House of Commons can cough an orator down, or

can walk away to dinner; and they were by no means sparing in the use of these privileges when Grenville was on his legs. But the poor young King had to endure all this eloquence with mournful civility. To the end of his life he continued to talk with horror of Grenville's orations.

About this time took place one of the most singular events in Pitt's life. There was a certain Sir William Pynsent, a Somersetshire baronet of Whig politics, who had been a member of the House of Commons in the days of Queen Anne, and had retired to rural privacy when the Tory party, towards the end of her reign, obtained the ascendancy in her councils. His manners were eccentric. His morals lay under very odious imputations. But his fidelity to his political opinions was unalterable. During fifty years of seclusion he continued to brood over the circumstances which had driven him from public life, the dismissal of the Whigs, the peace of Utrecht, the desertion of our allies.¹ He now thought that he perceived a close analogy between the well-remembered events of his youth and the events which he had witnessed in extreme old age; between the disgrace of Marlborough and the disgrace of Pitt; between the elevation of Harley and the elevation of Bute; between the treaty negotiated by St. John and the treaty negotiated by Bedford; between the wrongs of the House of Austria in 1712 and the wrongs of the House of Brandenburg in 1762.² This fancy took such possession of the old man's mind that he determined to leave his whole property to Pitt. In this way Pitt unexpectedly came into possession of near three thousand pounds a year. Nor could all the malice of his enemies find any ground for reproach in the trans-

¹ This peace was made by the Tory ministry of 1713. Although by its terms Spain ceded Gibraltar, and France ceded Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, to the English, these advantages were secured at the price of the abandonment of England's allies, the Germans and Dutch.

² Marlborough had no fixed political principles, and Harley had been much more than a favorite. These analogies were merely specious; but, as to the bad faith of the two treaties, there was real resemblance.

action. Nobody could call him a legacy-hunter. Nobody could accuse him of seizing that to which others had a better claim; for he had never in his life seen Sir William, and Sir William had left no relation so near as to be entitled to form any expectations respecting the estate.

The fortunes of Pitt seemed to flourish, but his health was worse than ever. We cannot find that during the session which began in January, 1765, he once appeared in Parliament. He remained some months in profound retirement at Hayes, his favorite villa, scarcely moving except from his arm-chair to his bed, and from his bed to his arm-chair, and often employing his wife as his amanuensis in his most confidential correspondence. Some of his detractors whispered that his invisibility was to be ascribed quite as much to affectation as to gout. In truth, his character, high and splendid as it was, wanted simplicity. With genius which did not need the aid of stage tricks, and with a spirit which should have been far above them, he had yet been through life in the habit of practicing them. It was therefore now surmised, that, having acquired all the consideration which could be derived from eloquence and from great services to the state, he had determined not to make himself cheap by often appearing in public, but, under the pretext of ill health, to surround himself with mystery, to emerge only at long intervals and on momentous occasions, and at other times to deliver his oracles only to a few favored votaries, who were suffered to make pilgrimages to his shrine. If such were his object, it was for a time fully attained. Never was the magic of his name so powerful, never was he regarded by his country with such superstitious veneration, as during this year of silence and seclusion.

While Pitt was thus absent from Parliament, Grenville proposed a measure destined to produce a great revolution, the effects of which will long be felt by the whole human race. We speak of the act for imposing stamp duties on the North American Colonies. The plan was eminently characteristic of its author. Every feature of the parent was found in the child. A

timid statesman would have shrunk from a step of which Walpole, at a time when the Colonies were far less powerful, had said, "He who shall propose it will be a much bolder man than I." But the nature of Grenville was insensible to fear. A statesman of large views would have felt that to lay taxes at Westminster on New England and New York was a course opposed, not indeed to the letter of the statute book, or to any decision contained in the term reports, but to the principles of good government, and to the spirit of the Constitution.¹ A statesman of large views would also have felt that ten times the estimated produce of the American stamps would have been dearly purchased by even a transient quarrel between the mother country and the Colonies. But Grenville knew of no spirit of the Constitution distinct from the letter of the law, and of no national interests except those which are expressed by pounds, shillings, and pence. That his policy might give birth to deep discontents in all the provinces, from the shore of the Great Lakes to the Mexican Sea; that France and Spain might seize the opportunity of revenge; that the empire might be dismembered; that the debt (that debt with the amount of which he perpetually reproached Pitt) might, in consequence of his own policy, be doubled,—these were possibilities which never occurred to that small, sharp mind.

The Stamp Act will be remembered as long as the globe lasts; but at the time it attracted much less notice in this country than another act² which is now almost utterly forgotten. The King fell ill, and was thought to be in a dangerous state. His complaint, we believe, was the same which at a later period repeatedly incapacitated him for the performance of his regal functions.³ The heir-apparent was only two years old. It was

¹ This phrase, "the spirit of the Constitution," was just at this time coming into use among those who opposed the royal prerogative.

² Known as the Regency Act of 1765.

³ The King had fits of lunacy for many years, and ceased to reign in November, 1810.

clearly proper to make provision for the administration of the government in case of a minority. The discussions on this point brought the quarrel between the Court and the ministry to a crisis. The King wished to be intrusted with the power of naming a regent by will. The ministers feared, or affected to fear, that, if this power were conceded to him, he would name the princess mother, nay, possibly the Earl of Bute. They therefore insisted on introducing into the bill words confining the King's choice to the royal family. Having thus excluded Bute, they urged the King to let them, in the most marked manner, exclude the princess dowager also. They assured him that the House of Commons would undoubtedly strike her name out, and by this threat they wrung from him a reluctant assent. In a few days it appeared that the representations by which they had induced the King to put this gross and public affront on his mother were unfounded. The friends of the princess in the House of Commons moved that her name should be inserted. The ministers could not decently attack the parent of their master. They hoped that the opposition would come to their help, and put on them a force to which they would gladly have yielded. But the majority of the opposition, though hating the princess, hated Grenville more, beheld his embarrassment with delight, and would do nothing to extricate him from it. The princess's name was accordingly placed in the list of persons qualified to hold the regency.

The King's resentment was now at the height. The present evil seemed to him more intolerable than any other. Even the junta of Whig grandees¹ could not treat him worse than he had been treated by his present ministers. In his distress he poured out his whole heart to his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland. The duke was not a man to be loved, but he was eminently a man to be trusted. He had an intrepid temper, a strong understanding, and a high sense of honor and duty. As a general, he belonged to a remarkable class of captains,—captains, we mean, whose

¹ The men, that is, who had been turned out of office and snubbed at court when Bute came in.

fate it has been to lose almost all the battles which they have fought, and yet to be reputed stout and skillful soldiers. Such captains were Coligni and William III. We might, perhaps, add Marshal Soult to the list. The bravery of the Duke of Cumberland was such as distinguished him even among the princes of his brave house. The indifference with which he rode about amidst musket-balls and cannon-balls was not the highest proof of his fortitude. Hopeless maladies, horrible surgical operations, far from unmanning him, did not even discompose him. With courage, he had the virtues which are akin to courage. He spoke the truth, was open in enmity and friendship, and upright in all his dealings; but his nature was hard, and what seemed to him justice was rarely tempered with mercy. He was therefore, during many years, one of the most unpopular men in England. The severity with which he had treated the rebels after the battle of Culloden had gained for him the name of "the Butcher." His attempts to introduce into the army of England, then in a most disorderly state, the rigorous discipline of Potsdam,¹ had excited still stronger disgust. Nothing was too bad to be believed of him. Many honest people were so absurd as to fancy, that, if he were left regent during the minority of his nephews, there would be another smothering in the Tower.² These feelings, however, had passed away. The duke had been living during some years in retirement. The English, full of animosity against the Scots, now blamed his royal Highness only for having left so many Camerons and Macphersons to be made gaugers and customhouse officers. He was therefore at present a favorite with his countrymen, and especially with the inhabitants of London.

¹ That is, the discipline of Frederick the Great, whose favorite residence was at Potsdam.

² An allusion to the nephews of Richard III., supposed to have been smothered in the Tower at the instigation of that king. On one occasion, when George III. was a mere lad, his soldier uncle, to amuse the youngster, drew out his saber and showed it to him. The boy started back and turned pale. "What," mumbled the duke, "must they have told him about me?"

He had little reason to love the King, and had shown clearly, though not obtrusively, his dislike of the system which had lately been pursued; but he had high and almost romantic notions of the duty which, as a prince of the blood, he owed to the head of his house. He determined to extricate his nephew from bondage, and to effect a reconciliation between the Whig party and the throne, on terms honorable to both.

In this mind he set off for Hayes, and was admitted to Pitt's sick-room; for Pitt would not leave his chamber, and would not communicate with any messenger of inferior dignity. And now began a long series of errors on the part of the illustrious statesman,—errors which involved his country in difficulties and distresses more serious even than those from which his genius had formerly rescued her. His language was haughty, unreasonable, almost unintelligible. The only thing which could be discerned through a cloud of vague and not very gracious phrases was that he would not at that moment take office. The truth, we believe, was this. Lord Temple, who was Pitt's evil genius, had just formed a new scheme of politics. Hatred of Bute and of the princess had, it should seem, taken entire possession of Temple's soul. He had quarreled with his brother George, because George had been connected with Bute and the princess. Now that George appeared to be the enemy of Bute and of the princess, Temple was eager to bring about a general family reconciliation. The three brothers—as Temple, Grenville, and Pitt were popularly called—might make a ministry without leaning for aid either on Bute or on the Whig connection. With such views, Temple used all his influence to dissuade Pitt from acceding to the propositions of the Duke of Cumberland. Pitt was not convinced. But Temple had an influence over him such as no other person had ever possessed. They were very old friends, very near relations. If Pitt's talents and fame had been useful to Temple, Temple's purse had formerly, in times of great need, been useful to Pitt. They had never been parted in politics. Twice they had come into the cabinet together: twice they had left it to-

gether. Pitt could not bear to think of taking office without his chief ally. Yet he felt that he was doing wrong, that he was throwing away a great opportunity of serving his country. The obscure and unconciliatory style of the answers which he returned to the overtures of the Duke of Cumberland may be ascribed to the embarrassment and vexation of a mind not at peace with itself. It is said that he mournfully exclaimed to Temple, —

“Extincti te meque, soror, populumque, patresque
Sidonios, urbemque tuam.”¹

The prediction was but too just.

Finding Pitt impracticable, the Duke of Cumberland advised the King to submit to necessity, and to keep Grenville and the Bedfords. It was indeed not a time at which offices could safely be left vacant. The unsettled state of the government had produced a general relaxation through all the departments of the public service. Meetings which at another time would have been harmless now turned to riots, and rapidly rose almost to the dignity of rebellions. The Houses of Parliament were blockaded by the Spitalfields² weavers. Bedford House was assailed on all sides by a furious rabble, and was strongly garrisoned with horse and foot. Some people attributed these disturbances to the friends of Bute, and some to the friends of Wilkes; but, whatever might be the cause, the effect was general insecurity. Under such circumstances, the King had no choice. With bitter feelings of mortification, he informed the ministers that he meant to retain them.

They answered by demanding from him a promise on his royal word never more to consult Lord Bute. The promise was given. They then demanded something more. Lord Bute's brother, Mr. Mackenzie, held a lucrative office in Scotland. Mr. Mackenzie must be dismissed. The King replied that the office had

¹ *Æneid*, iv. 682. “Ah, sister! you have destroyed yourself and me, your people, your Tyrian nobles, and your city.”

² A region in the northeast quarter of London; seat of extensive silk manufacture.

been given under very peculiar circumstances, and that he had promised never to take it away while he lived. Grenville was obstinate; and the King, with a very bad grace, yielded.

The session of Parliament was over. The triumph of the ministers was complete. The King was almost as much a prisoner as Charles I. had been when in the Isle of Wight. Such were the fruits of the policy which, only a few months before, was represented as having forever secured the throne against the dictation of insolent subjects.

His Majesty's natural resentment showed itself in every look and word. In his extremity he looked wistfully towards that Whig connection, once the object of his dread and hatred. The Duke of Devonshire, who had been treated with such unjustifiable harshness, had lately died, and had been succeeded by his son, who was still a boy. The King condescended to express his regret for what had passed, and to invite the young duke to court. The noble youth came, attended by his uncles, and was received with marked graciousness.

This and many other symptoms of the same kind irritated the ministers. They had still in store for their sovereign an insult which would have provoked his grandfather to kick them out of the room. Grenville and Bedford demanded an audience of him, and read him a remonstrance of many pages, which they had drawn up with great care. His Majesty was accused of breaking his word, and of treating his advisers with gross unfairness. The princess was mentioned in language by no means eulogistic. Hints were thrown out that Bute's head was in danger. The King was plainly told that he must not continue to show, as he had done, that he disliked the situation in which he was placed; that he must frown upon the opposition; that he must carry it fair towards his ministers in public. He several times interrupted the reading by declaring that he had ceased to hold any communication with Bute. But the ministers, disregarding his denial, went on; and the King listened in silence, almost choked by rage. When they ceased to read, he merely

made a gesture expressive of his wish to be left alone. He afterwards owned that he thought he should have gone into a fit.

Driven to despair, he again had recourse to the Duke of Cumberland; and the Duke of Cumberland again had recourse to Pitt. Pitt was really desirous to undertake the direction of affairs, and owned, with many dutiful expressions, that the terms offered by the King were all that any subject could desire. But Temple was impracticable; and Pitt, with great regret, declared that he could not, without the concurrence of his brother-in-law, undertake the administration.

The duke now saw only one way of delivering his nephew. An administration must be formed of the Whigs in opposition, without Pitt's help. The difficulties seemed almost insuperable. Death and desertion had grievously thinned the ranks of the party lately supreme in the state. Those among whom the duke's choice lay might be divided into two classes,—men too old for important offices, and men who had never been in any important office before. The cabinet must be composed of broken invalids or of raw recruits.

This was an evil, yet not an unmixed evil. If the new Whig statesmen had little experience in business and debate, they were, on the other hand, pure from the taint of that political immorality which had deeply infected their predecessors. Long prosperity had corrupted that great party which had expelled the Stuarts, limited the prerogatives of the Crown, and curbed the intolerance of the Hierarchy. Adversity had already produced a salutary effect. On the day of the accession of George III., the ascendancy of the Whig party terminated, and on that day the purification of the Whig party began. The rising chiefs of that party were men of a very different sort from Sandys and Winnington, from Sir William Yonge and Henry Fox. They were men worthy to have charged by the side of Hampden at Chalgrove, or to have exchanged the last embrace with Russell¹ on the scaffold in Lincoln's Inn Fields. They carried into politics the

¹ Lord William Russell, executed in 1683 for alleged treason.

same high principles of virtue which regulated their private dealings, nor would they stoop to promote even the noblest and most salutary ends by means which honor and probity condemn. Such men were Lord John Cavendish, Sir George Savile, and others whom we hold in honor as the second founders of the Whig party, as the restorers of its pristine health and energy after half a century of degeneracy.

The chief of this respectable band was the Marquis of Rockingham, a man of splendid fortune, excellent sense, and stainless character. He was indeed nervous to such a degree, that, to the very close of his life, he never rose without great reluctance and embarrassment to address the House of Lords. But, though not a great orator, he had in a high degree some of the qualities of a statesman. He chose his friends well, and he had in an extraordinary degree the art of attaching them to him by ties of the most honorable kind. The cheerful fidelity with which they adhered to him through many years of almost hopeless opposition was less admirable than the disinterestedness and delicacy which they showed when he rose to power.

We are inclined to think that the use and the abuse of party cannot be better illustrated than by a parallel between two powerful connections of that time,—the Rockinghams and the Bedfords. The Rockingham party was, in our view, exactly what a party should be. It consisted of men bound together by common opinions, by common public objects, by mutual esteem. That they desired to obtain, by honest and constitutional means, the direction of affairs, they openly avowed; but, though often invited to accept the honors and emoluments of office, they steadily refused to do so on any conditions inconsistent with their principles. The Bedford party, as a party, had, as far as we can discover, no principle whatever. Rigby and Sandwich wanted public money, and thought that they should fetch a higher price jointly than singly. They therefore acted in concert, and prevailed on a much more important and a much better man than themselves to act with them.

It was to Rockingham that the Duke of Cumberland now had recourse. The marquis consented to take the treasury. Newcastle, so long the recognized chief of the Whigs, could not well be excluded from the ministry. He was appointed keeper of the privy seal. A very honest, clear-headed country gentleman, of the name of Dowdeswell, became chancellor of the exchequer. Gen. Conway, who had served under the Duke of Cumberland, and was strongly attached to his royal Highness, was made secretary of state, with the lead in the House of Commons. A great Whig nobleman in the prime of manhood, from whom much was at that time expected, — Augustus, Duke of Grafton, — was the other secretary.

The oldest man living could remember no government so weak in oratorical talents and in official experience. The general opinion was, that the ministers might hold office during the recess, but that the first day of debate in Parliament would be the last day of their power. Charles Townshend was asked what he thought of the new administration. "It is," said he, "mere lutestring, pretty summer wear. It will never do for the winter."

At this conjuncture Lord Rockingham had the wisdom to discern the value, and secure the aid, of an ally, who, to eloquence surpassing the eloquence of Pitt,¹ and to industry which shamed the industry of Grenville, united an amplitude of comprehension to which neither Pitt nor Grenville could lay claim. A young Irishman had some time before come over to push his fortune in London. He had written much for the booksellers; but he was best known by a little treatise,² in which the style and reasoning of Bolingbroke were mimicked with exquisite skill, and by a theory,³ of more ingenuity than soundness, touching the pleasures which we receive from the objects of taste. He had also attained

¹ There is abundant evidence that Burke's delivery was defective, and his presence uncommanding. Literary admiration for Burke had perhaps some influence upon Macaulay's estimate of the statesman.

² A Vindication of Natural Society.

³ Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful.

a high reputation as a talker, and was regarded by the men of letters who supped together at the Turk's Head¹ as the only match in conversation for Dr. Johnson. He now became private secretary to Lord Rockingham, and was brought into Parliament by his patron's influence. These arrangements, indeed, were not made without some difficulty. The Duke of Newcastle, who was always meddling and chattering, adjured the first lord of the treasury to be on his guard against this adventurer, whose real name was O'Bourke, and whom his grace knew to be a wild Irishman, a Jacobite, a Papist, a concealed Jesuit. Lord Rockingham treated the calumny as it deserved; and the Whig party was strengthened and adorned by the accession of Edmund Burke.

The party, indeed, stood in need of accessions, for it sustained about this time an almost irreparable loss. The Duke of Cumberland had formed the government, and was its main support. His exalted rank and great name in some degree balanced the fame of Pitt. As mediator between the Whigs and the Court, he held a place which no other person could fill. The strength of his character supplied that which was the chief defect of the new ministry. Conway, in particular, who, with excellent intentions and respectable talents, was the most dependent and irresolute of human beings, drew from the counsels of that masculine mind a determination not his own. Before the meeting of Parliament the duke suddenly died. His death was generally regarded as the signal of great troubles, and on this account, as well as from respect for his personal qualities, was greatly lamented. It was remarked that the mourning in London was the most general ever known, and was both deeper and longer than the "Gazette" had prescribed.

In the mean time every mail from America brought alarming

¹ The coffee-house where the "Literary Club" met once a week. This famous club was founded in 1764, and included among its members, besides Burke and Johnson, such men as Goldsmith, Garrick, and Sir Joshua Reynolds.

tidings. The crop which Grenville had sown, his successors had now to reap. The Colonies were in a state bordering on rebellion. The stamps were burned. The revenue officers were tarred and feathered. All traffic between the discontented provinces and the mother country was interrupted. The exchange of London was in dismay. Half the firms of Bristol and Liverpool were threatened with bankruptcy. In Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, it was said that three artisans out of every ten had been turned adrift. Civil war seemed to be at hand; and it could not be doubted, that, if once the British nation were divided against itself, France and Spain would soon take part in the quarrel.

Three courses were open to the ministers. The first was to enforce the Stamp Act by the sword. This was the course on which the King, and Grenville, whom the King hated beyond all living men, were alike bent. The natures of both were arbitrary and stubborn. They resembled each other so much that they could never be friends; but they resembled each other also so much that they saw almost all important practical questions in the same point of view. Neither of them would bear to be governed by the other, but they were perfectly agreed as to the best way of governing the people.

Another course was that which Pitt recommended. He held that the British Parliament was not constitutionally competent to pass a law for taxing the Colonies. He therefore considered the Stamp Act as a nullity, — as a document of no more validity than Charles's writ of ship-money, or James's proclamation dispensing with the penal laws.¹ This doctrine seems to us, we must own, to be altogether untenable.

Between these extreme courses lay a third way. The opinion of the most judicious and temperate statesmen of those times was that the British Constitution had set no limit whatever to the

¹ The penal laws were directed against Roman Catholics. James II. endeavored to nullify them by his illegal Declaration of Indulgence in 1687. They were repealed by the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829.

legislative power of the British King, Lords, and Commons, over the whole British Empire. Parliament, they held, was legally competent to tax America, as Parliament was legally competent to commit any other act of folly or wickedness, to confiscate the property of all the merchants in Lombard Street, or to attain any man in the kingdom of high treason, without examining witnesses against him, or hearing him in his own defense. The most atrocious act of confiscation or of attainder is just as valid an act as the Toleration Act¹ or the Habeas Corpus Act. But from acts of confiscation and acts of attainder lawgivers are bound, by every obligation of morality, systematically to refrain. In the same manner ought the British Legislature to refrain from taxing the American Colonies. The Stamp Act was indefensible, not because it was beyond the constitutional competence of Parliament, but because it was unjust and impolitic, sterile of revenue, and fertile of discontents. These sound doctrines were adopted by Lord Rockingham and his colleagues, and were, during a long course of years, inculcated by Burke in orations, some of which will last as long as the English language.

The winter came, the Parliament met, and the state of the Colonies instantly became the subject of fierce contention. Pitt, whose health had been somewhat restored by the waters of Bath, reappeared in the House of Commons, and, with ardent and pathetic eloquence, not only condemned the Stamp Act, but applauded the resistance of Massachusetts and Virginia, and vehemently maintained, — in defiance, we must say, of all reason and of all authority, — that, according to the British Constitution, the supreme legislative power does not include the power to tax. The language of Grenville, on the other hand, was such as Strafford might have used at the council table of Charles I., when news came of the resistance to the liturgy at Edinburgh.² The

¹ This was the Act of 1689, granting freedom of worship to dissenters.

² Charles I., in 1637, made a futile attempt to impose the Episcopal liturgy on the Presbyterians of Scotland. In Edinburgh this endeavor provoked the dangerous Porteus riots.

Colonists were traitors: those who excused them were little better. Frigates, mortars, bayonets, sabers, were the proper remedies for such distempers.

The ministers occupied an intermediate position: they proposed to declare that the legislative authority of the British Parliament over the whole empire was in all cases supreme; and they proposed, at the same time, to repeal the Stamp Act. To the former measure Pitt objected, but it was carried with scarcely a dissentient voice. The repeal of the Stamp Act Pitt strongly supported, but against the government was arrayed a formidable assemblage of opponents. Grenville and the Bedfords were furious. Temple, who had now allied himself closely with his brother, and separated himself from Pitt, was no despicable enemy. This, however, was not the worst. The ministry was without its natural strength. It had to struggle, not only against its avowed enemies, but against the insidious hostility of the King, and of a set of persons who about this time began to be designated as the King's friends.

The character of this faction has been drawn by Burke with even more than his usual force and vivacity. Those who know how strongly, through his whole life, his judgment was biased by his passions, may not unnaturally suspect that he has left us rather a caricature than a likeness; and yet there is scarcely in the whole portrait a single touch of which the fidelity is not proved by facts of unquestionable authenticity.

The public generally regarded the King's friends as a body of which Bute was the directing soul. It was to no purpose that the earl professed to have done with politics, that he absented himself year after year from the levee and the drawing-room, that he went to the north, that he went to Rome. The notion that in some inexplicable manner he dictated all the measures of the Court, was fixed in the minds, not only of the multitude, but of some who had good opportunities of obtaining information, and who ought to have been superior to vulgar prejudices. Our own belief is that these suspicions were unfounded, and that he ceased

to have any communication with the King on political matters some time before the dismissal of George Grenville. The supposition of Bute's influence is indeed by no means necessary to explain the phenomena. The King, in 1765, was no longer the ignorant and inexperienced boy who had in 1760 been managed by his mother and his groom of the stole. He had, during several years, observed the struggles of parties, and conferred daily on high questions of state with able and experienced politicians. His way of life had developed his understanding and character. He was now no longer a puppet, but had very decided opinions both of men and things. Nothing could be more natural than that he should have high notions of his own prerogatives, should be impatient of opposition, and should wish all public men to be detached from each other and dependent on himself alone; nor could anything be more natural than that, in the state in which the political world then was, he should find instruments fit for his purposes.

Thus sprang into existence and into note a reptile species of politicians never before and never since known in our country. These men disclaimed all political ties except those which bound them to the throne. They were willing to coalesce with any party, to abandon any party, to undermine any party, to assault any party, at a moment's notice. To them, all administrations and all oppositions were the same. They regarded Bute, Grenville, Rockingham, Pitt, without one sentiment either of predilection or of aversion. They were the King's friends. It is to be observed that this friendship implied no personal intimacy. These people had never lived with their master, as Dodington at one time lived with his father, or as Sheridan afterwards lived with his son. They never hunted with him in the morning, or played cards with him in the evening; never shared his mutton, or walked with him among his turnips. Only one or two of them ever saw his face except on public days. The whole band, however, always had early and accurate information as to his personal inclinations. These people were never high in the administration.

They were generally to be found in places of much emolument, little labor, and no responsibility; and these places they continued to occupy securely while the cabinet was six or seven times reconstructed. Their peculiar business was, not to support the ministry against the opposition, but to support the King against the ministry. Whenever his Majesty was induced to give a reluctant assent to the introduction of some bill which his constitutional advisers regarded as necessary, his friends in the House of Commons were sure to speak against it, to vote against it, to throw in its way every obstruction compatible with the forms of Parliament. If his Majesty found it necessary to admit into his closet a secretary of state or a first lord of the treasury whom he disliked, his friends were sure to miss no opportunity of thwarting and humbling the obnoxious minister. In return for these services, the King covered them with his protection. It was to no purpose that his responsible servants complained to him that they were daily betrayed and impeded by men who were eating the bread of the government. He sometimes justified the offenders, sometimes excused them, sometimes owned that they were to blame, but said that he must take time to consider whether he could part with them. He never would turn them out; and, while everything else in the state was constantly changing, these sycophants seemed to have a life estate in their offices.

It was well known to the King's friends, that, though his Majesty had consented to the repeal of the Stamp Act, he had consented with a very bad grace; and that though he had eagerly welcomed the Whigs, when, in his extreme need and at his earnest entreaty, they had undertaken to free him from an insupportable yoke, he had by no means got over his early prejudices against his deliverers. The ministers soon found, that, while they were encountered in front by the whole force of a strong opposition, their rear was assailed by a large body of those whom they had regarded as auxiliaries.

Nevertheless, Lord Rockingham and his adherents went on

resolutely with the bill for repealing the Stamp Act. They had on their side all the manufacturing and commercial interests of the realm. In the debates the government was powerfully supported. Two great orators and statesmen, belonging to two different generations, repeatedly put forth all their powers in defense of the bill. The House of Commons heard Pitt for the last time, and Burke for the first time, and was in doubt to which of them the palm of eloquence should be assigned. It was indeed a splendid sunset and a splendid dawn.

For a time the event seemed doubtful. In several divisions the ministers were hard pressed. On one occasion, not less than twelve of the King's friends, all men in office, voted against the government. It was to no purpose that Lord Rockingham remonstrated with the King. His Majesty confessed that there was ground for complaint, but hoped that gentle means would bring the mutineers to a better mind. If they persisted in their misconduct, he would dismiss them.

At length the decisive day arrived. The gallery, the lobby, the Court of Requests, the staircases, were crowded with merchants from all the great ports of the island. The debate lasted till long after midnight. On the division the ministers had a great majority. The dread of civil war, and the outcry of all the trading towns of the kingdom, had been too strong for the combined strength of the Court and the opposition.

It was in the first dim twilight of a February morning¹ that the doors were thrown open, and that the chiefs of the hostile parties showed themselves to the multitude. Conway was received with loud applause. But when Pitt appeared, all eyes were fixed on him alone. All hats were in the air. Loud and long huzzas accompanied him to his chair, and a train of admirers escorted him all the way to his home. Then came forth Grenville. As soon as he was recognized, a storm of hisses and curses broke forth. He turned fiercely on the crowd, and caught one

¹ Of the year 1766. The Act was repealed on the 18th of March following.

man by the throat. The bystanders were in great alarm. If a scuffle began, none could say how it might end. Fortunately, the person who had been collared only said, "If I may not hiss, sir, I hope I may laugh," and laughed in Grenville's face.

The majority had been so decisive, that all the opponents of the ministry, save one, were disposed to let the bill pass without any further contention. But solicitation and expostulation were thrown away on Grenville. His indomitable spirit rose up stronger and stronger under the load of public hatred. He fought out the battle obstinately to the end. On the last reading he had a sharp altercation with his brother-in-law, the last of their many sharp altercations. Pitt thundered in his loftiest tones against the man who had wished to dip the ermine of a British king in the blood of the British people. Grenville replied with his wonted intrepidity and asperity. "If the tax," he said, "were still to be laid on, I would lay it on. For the evils which it may produce, my accuser is answerable. His profusion made it necessary. His declarations against the constitutional powers of kings, Lords, and Commons have made it doubly necessary. I do not envy him the huzza. I glory in the hiss. If it were to be done again, I would do it."

The repeal of the Stamp Act was the chief measure of Lord Rockingham's government. But that government is entitled to the praise of having put a stop to two oppressive practices, which, in Wilkes's case, had attracted the notice and excited the just indignation of the public. The House of Commons was induced by the ministers to pass a resolution condemning the use of general warrants, and another resolution condemning the seizure of papers in cases of libel.

It must be added, to the lasting honor of Lord Rockingham, that his administration was the first which, during a long course of years, had the courage and the virtue to refrain from bribing members of Parliament. His enemies accused him and his friends of weakness, of haughtiness, of party spirit; but calumny itself never dared to couple his name with corruption.

Unhappily his government, though one of the best that has ever existed in our country, was also one of the weakest. The King's friends assailed and obstructed the ministers at every turn. To appeal to the King was only to draw forth new promises and new evasions. His Majesty was sure that there must be some misunderstanding. Lord Rockingham had better speak to the gentlemen. They should be dismissed on the next fault. The next fault was soon committed, and his Majesty still continued to shuffle. It was too bad. It was quite abominable; but it mattered less as the prorogation was at hand. He would give the delinquents one more chance. If they did not alter their conduct next session, he should not have one word to say for them. He had already resolved, that, long before the commencement of the next session, Lord Rockingham should cease to be minister.

We have now come to a part of our story which, admiring as we do the genius and the many noble qualities of Pitt, we cannot relate without much pain. We believe that at this conjuncture he had it in his power to give the victory either to the Whigs or to the King's friends. If he had allied himself closely with Lord Rockingham, what could the Court have done? There would have been only one alternative,—the Whigs or Grenville; and there could be no doubt what the King's choice would be. He still remembered, as well he might, with the uttermost bitterness, the thralldom from which his uncle had freed him, and said about this time, with great vehemence, that he would sooner see the Devil come into his closet than Grenville.

And what was there to prevent Pitt from allying himself with Lord Rockingham? On all the most important questions their views were the same. They had agreed in condemning the peace, the Stamp Act, the general warrant, the seizure of papers. The points on which they differed were few and unimportant. In integrity, in disinterestedness, in hatred of corruption, they resembled each other. Their personal interests could not clash. They sat in different Houses, and Pitt had always declared that nothing should induce him to be first lord of the treasury.

If the opportunity of forming a coalition beneficial to the state, and honorable to all concerned, was suffered to escape, the fault was not with the Whig ministers. They behaved towards Pitt with an obsequiousness which, had it not been the effect of sincere admiration and of anxiety for the public interests, might have been justly called servile. They repeatedly gave him to understand that, if he chose to join their ranks, they were ready to receive him, not as an associate, but as a leader. They had proved their respect for him by bestowing a peerage on the person who at that time enjoyed the largest share of his confidence, Chief Justice Pratt. What, then, was there to divide Pitt from the Whigs? What, on the other hand, was there in common between him and the King's friends, that he should lend himself to their purposes,—he who had never owed anything to flattery or intrigue, he whose eloquence and independent spirit had overawed two generations of slaves and jobbers, he who had twice been forced by the enthusiasm of an admiring nation on a reluctant prince?

Unhappily the Court had gained Pitt, not, it is true, by those ignoble means which were employed when such men as Rigby and Wedderburn were to be won, but by allurements suited to a nature noble even in its aberrations. The King set himself to seduce the one man who could turn the Whigs out without letting Grenville in. Praise, caresses, promises, were lavished on the idol of the nation. He, and he alone, could put an end to faction, could bid defiance to all the powerful connections in the land united,—Whigs and Tories, Rockinghams, Bedfords, and Grenvilles. These blandishments produced a great effect; for though Pitt's spirit was high and manly, though his eloquence was often exerted with formidable effect against the Court, and though his theory of government had been learned in the school of Locke and Sidney,¹ he had always regarded the person of the sovereign with profound veneration. As soon as he was brought

¹ That is, in the school of constitutional government. Both these distinguished men wrote treatises in support of the sovereignty of the people.

face to face with royalty, his imagination and sensibility were too strong for his principles. His Whiggism thawed and disappeared; and he became, for the time, a Tory of the old Ormond pattern.¹ Nor was he by any means unwilling to assist in the work of dissolving all political connections. His own weight in the state was wholly independent of such connections. He was therefore inclined to look on them with dislike, and made far too little distinction between gangs of knaves associated for the mere purpose of robbing the public, and confederacies of honorable men for the promotion of great public objects. Nor had he the sagacity to perceive that the strenuous efforts which he made to annihilate all parties tended only to establish the ascendancy of one party, and that the basest and most hateful of all.

It may be doubted whether he would have been thus misled, if his mind had been in full health and vigor; but the truth is that he had for some time been in an unnatural state of excitement. No suspicion of this sort had yet got abroad. His eloquence had never shone with more splendor than during the recent debates. But people afterwards called to mind many things which ought to have roused their apprehensions. His habits were gradually becoming more and more eccentric. A horror of all loud sounds, such as is said to have been one of the many oddities of Wallenstein, grew upon him. Though the most affectionate of fathers, he could not at this time bear to hear the voices of his own children, and laid out great sums at Hayes in buying up houses contiguous to his own, merely that he might have no neighbors to disturb him with their noise. He then sold Hayes, and took possession of a villa at Hampstead, where he again began to purchase houses to right and left. In expense, indeed, he vied, during this part of his life, with the wealthiest of the conquerors of Bengal and Tanjore. At Burton Pynsent he ordered a great extent of ground to be planted with cedars. Cedars enough for the purpose were not to be found in Somer-

¹ That is, devoted to the throne. Ormond was a devoted adherent of the Stuarts.

setshire: they were therefore collected in London, and sent down by land carriage. Relays of laborers were hired, and the work went on all night by torchlight. No man could be more abstemious than Pitt; yet the profusion of his kitchen was a wonder even to epicures. Several dinners were always dressing, for his appetite was capricious and fanciful; and at whatever moment he felt inclined to eat, he expected a meal to be instantly on the table. Other circumstances might be mentioned, such as separately are of little moment, but such as, when taken together, and when viewed in connection with the strange events which followed, justify us in believing that his mind was already in a morbid state.

Soon after the close of the session of Parliament, Lord Rockingham received his dismissal. He retired, accompanied by a firm body of friends, whose consistency and uprightness enmity itself was forced to admit. None of them had asked or obtained any pension or any sinecure, either in possession or in reversion. Such disinterestedness was then rare among politicians: Their chief, though not a man of brilliant talents, had won for himself an honorable fame, which he kept pure to the last. He had, in spite of difficulties which seemed almost insurmountable, removed great abuses and averted a civil war. Sixteen years later,¹ in a dark and terrible day, he was again called upon to save the state, brought to the very brink of ruin by the same perfidy and obstinacy which had embarrassed, and at length overthrown, his first administration.

Pitt was planting in Somersetshire when he was summoned to court by a letter written by the royal hand. He instantly hastened to London. The irritability of his mind and body were increased by the rapidity with which he traveled; and when he reached his journey's end he was suffering from fever. Ill as he was, he saw the King at Richmond,² and undertook to form an administration.

¹ Rockingham succeeded Lord North in March, 1782.

² The seat of one of the royal palaces.

Pitt was scarcely in the state in which a man should be who has to conduct delicate and arduous negotiations. In his letters to his wife he complained that the conferences in which it was necessary for him to bear a part heated his blood and accelerated his pulse. From other sources of information we learn that his language, even to those whose coöperation he wished to engage, was strangely peremptory and despotic. Some of his notes written at this time have been preserved, and are in a style which Louis XIV.¹ would have been too well bred to employ in addressing any French gentleman.

In the attempt to dissolve all parties, Pitt met with some difficulties. Some Whigs, whom the Court would gladly have detached from Lord Rockingham, rejected all offers. The Bedfords were perfectly willing to break with Grenville, but Pitt would not come up to their terms. Temple, whom Pitt at first meant to place at the head of the treasury, proved intractable. A coldness indeed had, during some months, been fast growing between the brothers-in-law, so long and so closely allied in politics. Pitt was angry with Temple for opposing the repeal of the Stamp Act. Temple was angry with Pitt for refusing to accede to that family league which was now the favorite plan at Stowe. At length the earl proposed an equal partition of power and patronage, and offered, on this condition, to give up his brother George. Pitt thought the demand exorbitant, and positively refused compliance. A bitter quarrel followed. Each of the kinsmen was true to his character. Temple's soul festered with spite, and Pitt's swelled into contempt. Temple represented Pitt as the most odious of hypocrites and traitors. Pitt held a different and perhaps a more provoking tone. Temple was a good sort of man enough, whose single title to distinction was, that he had a large garden, with a large piece of water, and a great many pavilions and summer-houses. To his fortunate connection with a

¹ "His treatment of his court was such as nothing but their abject fear of him, and the meanness engendered by the atmosphere of such a court, could explain."

great orator and statesman he was indebted for an importance in the state which his own talents could never have gained for him. That importance had turned his head. He had begun to fancy that he could form administrations, and govern empires. It was piteous to see a well-meaning man under such a delusion.

In spite of all these difficulties, a ministry was made such as the King wished to see, — a ministry in which all his Majesty's friends were comfortably accommodated, and which, with the exception of his Majesty's friends, contained no four persons who had ever in their lives been in the habit of acting together. Men who had never concurred in a single vote found themselves seated at the same board. The office of paymaster was divided between two persons who had never exchanged a word. Most of the chief posts were filled either by personal adherents of Pitt, or by members of the late ministry, who had been induced to remain in place after the dismissal of Lord Rockingham. To the former class belonged Pratt, now Lord Camden, who accepted the great seal, and Lord Shelburne, who was made one of the secretaries of state. To the latter class belonged the Duke of Grafton, who became first lord of the treasury, and Conway, who kept his old position, both in the government and in the House of Commons. Charles Townshend, who had belonged to every party, and cared for none, was chancellor of the exchequer. Pitt himself was declared prime-minister, but refused to take any laborious office. He was created Earl of Chatham, and the privy seal was delivered to him.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that the failure — the complete and disgraceful failure — of this arrangement is not to be ascribed to any want of capacity in the persons whom we have named. None of them was deficient in abilities; and four of them — Pitt himself, Shelburne, Camden, and Townshend — were men of high intellectual eminence. The fault was not in the materials, but in the principle on which the materials were put together. Pitt had mixed up these conflicting elements in the full confidence that he should be able to keep them all in perfect subordination to him-

self, and in perfect harmony with each other. We shall soon see how the experiment succeeded.

On the very day on which the new prime-minister kissed hands,¹ three fourths of that popularity which he had long enjoyed without a rival, and to which he owed the greater part of his authority, departed from him. A violent outcry was raised, not against that part of his conduct which really deserved severe condemnation, but against a step in which we can see nothing to censure. His acceptance of a peerage produced a general burst of indignation. Yet surely no peerage had ever been better earned, nor was there ever a statesman who more needed the repose of the Upper House. Pitt was now growing old. He was much older in constitution than in years. It was with imminent risk to his life that he had on some important occasions attended his duty in Parliament. During the session of 1764 he had not been able to take part in a single debate. It was impossible that he should go through the nightly labor of conducting the business of the government in the House of Commons. His wish to be transferred, under such circumstances, to a less busy and a less turbulent assembly, was natural and reasonable. The nation, however, overlooked all these considerations. Those who had most loved and honored the Great Commoner were loudest in invective against the new-made Lord. London had hitherto been true to him through every vicissitude. When the citizens learned that he had been sent for from Somersetshire, that he had been closeted with the King at Richmond, and that he was to be first minister, they had been in transports of joy. Preparations were made for a grand entertainment and for a general illumination. The lamps had actually been placed round the Monument, when the "Gazette" announced that the object of all this enthusiasm was an earl. Instantly the feast was countermanded. The lamps were taken down. The newspapers raised the roar of obloquy. Pamphlets, made up of calumny and scurrility, filled the shops of all the booksellers; and of those pam-

¹ That is, kissed the sovereign's hands on taking office.

phlets the most galling were written under the direction of the malignant Temple. It was now the fashion to compare the two Williams,—William Pulteney¹ and William Pitt. Both, it was said, had, by eloquence and simulated patriotism, acquired a great ascendancy in the House of Commons and in the country; both had been intrusted with the office of reforming the government; both had, when at the height of power and popularity, been seduced by the splendor of the coronet; both had been made earls, and both had at once become objects of aversion and scorn to the nation which a few hours before had regarded them with affection and veneration.

The clamor against Pitt appears to have had a serious effect on the foreign relations of the country. His name had till now acted like a spell at Versailles and St. Ildefonso.² English travelers on the Continent had remarked that nothing more was necessary to silence a whole roomful of boasting Frenchmen than to drop a hint of the probability that Mr. Pitt would return to power. In an instant there was deep silence: all shoulders rose, and all faces were lengthened. Now, unhappily, every foreign court, in learning that he was recalled to office, learned also that he no longer possessed the hearts of his countrymen. Ceasing to be loved at home, he ceased to be feared abroad. The name of Pitt had been a charmed name. Our envoys tried in vain to conjure with the name of Chatham.

The difficulties which beset Chatham were daily increased by the despotic manner in which he treated all around him. Lord Rockingham had, at the time of the change of ministry, acted with great moderation, had expressed a hope that the new government would act on the principles of the late government, and had even interfered to prevent many of his friends from quitting office. Thus Saunders and Keppel, two naval commanders of

¹ Pulteney became Earl of Bath. He was a prominent opposition leader in the days of Walpole's ministry.

² Versailles (a suburb of Paris) and St. Ildefonso (a suburb of Madrid) were the seats of the French and Spanish courts respectively.

great eminence, had been induced to remain at the Admiralty, where their services were much needed. The Duke of Portland was still lord-chamberlain; and Lord Besborough, postmaster. But within a quarter of a year Lord Chatham had so deeply affronted these men, that they all retired in disgust. In truth, his tone, submissive in the closet, was at this time insupportably tyrannical in the cabinet. His colleagues were merely his clerks for naval, financial, and diplomatic business. Conway, meek as he was, was on one occasion provoked into declaring that such language as Lord Chatham's had never been heard west of Constantinople, and was with difficulty prevented by Horace Walpole¹ from resigning, and rejoining the standard of Lord Rockingham.

The breach which had been made in the government by the defection of so many of the Rockinghams, Chatham hoped to supply by the help of the Bedfords; but with the Bedfords he could not deal as he had dealt with other parties. It was to no purpose that he bade high for one or two members of the faction, in the hope of detaching them from the rest. They were to be had, but they were to be had only in the lot. There was indeed, for a moment, some wavering and some disputing among them; but at length the counsels of the shrewd and resolute Rigby prevailed. They determined to stand firmly together, and plainly intimated to Chatham that he must take them all, or that he should get none of them. The event proved that they were wiser in their generation than any other connection in the state. In a few months they were able to dictate their own terms.

The most important public measure of Lord Chatham's administration was his celebrated interference with the corn trade. The harvest had been bad; the price of food was high; and he thought it necessary to take on himself the responsibility of laying an embargo on the exportation of grain. When Parliament met, this proceeding was attacked by the opposition as unconstitutional, and defended by the ministers as indispensably necessary.

¹ The son of Sir Robert Walpole; wit, antiquarian, and man of letters.

At last an act was passed to indemnify all who had been concerned in the embargo.

The first words uttered by Chatham in the House of Lords were in defense of his conduct on this occasion. He spoke with a calmness, sobriety, and dignity well suited to the audience which he was addressing. A subsequent speech which he made on the same subject was less successful. He bade defiance to aristocratical connections with a superciliousness to which the Peers were not accustomed, and with tones and gestures better suited to a large and stormy assembly than to the body of which he was now a member. A short altercation followed, and he was told very plainly that he should not be suffered to browbeat the old nobility of England.

It gradually became clearer and clearer that he was in a dis-tempered state of mind. His attention had been drawn to the territorial acquisitions of the East India Company, and he determined to bring the whole of that great subject before Parliament. He would not, however, confer on the subject with any of his colleagues. It was in vain that Conway, who was charged with the conduct of business in the House of Commons, and Charles Townshend, who was responsible for the direction of the finances, begged for some glimpse of light as to what was in contemplation. Chatham's answers were sullen and mysterious. He must decline any discussion with them; he did not want their assistance; he had fixed on a person to take charge of his measure in the House of Commons. This person was a member who was not connected with the government, and who neither had, nor deserved to have, the ear of the House, — a noisy, purse-proud, illiterate demagogue, whose cockney English and scraps of mispronounced Latin were the jest of the newspapers, — Alderman Beckford. It may well be supposed that these strange proceedings produced a ferment through the whole political world. The city was in commotion. The East India Company invoked the faith of charters. Burke thundered against the ministers. The ministers looked at each other, and knew not what to say. In

the midst of the confusion, Lord Chatham proclaimed himself gouty, and retired to Bath. It was announced, after some time, that he was better, that he would shortly return, that he would soon put everything in order. A day was fixed for his arrival in London; but when he reached the castle inn at Marlborough, he stopped, shut himself up in his room, and remained there some weeks. Everybody who traveled that road was amazed by the number of his attendants. Footmen and grooms, dressed in his family livery, filled the whole inn, though one of the largest in England, and swarmed in the streets of the little town. The truth was that the invalid had insisted that during his stay all the waiters and stable-boys of the castle should wear his livery.

His colleagues were in despair. The Duke of Grafton proposed to go down to Marlborough in order to consult the oracle; but he was informed that Lord Chatham must decline all conversation on business. In the mean time all the parties which were out of office — Bedfords, Grenvilles, and Rockinghams — joined to oppose the distracted government on the vote for the land tax. They were reënforced by almost all the county members, and had a considerable majority. This was the first time that a ministry had been beaten on an important division in the House of Commons since the fall of Sir Robert Walpole. The administration thus furiously assailed from without was torn by internal dissensions. It had been formed on no principle whatever. From the very first, nothing but Chatham's authority had prevented the hostile contingents which made up his ranks from going to blows with each other. That authority was now withdrawn, and everything was in commotion. Conway, a brave soldier, but in civil affairs the most timid and irresolute of men, afraid of disobliging the King, afraid of being abused in the newspapers, afraid of being thought factious if he went out, afraid of being thought interested if he staid in, afraid of everything, and afraid of being known to be afraid of anything, was beaten backwards and forwards like a shuttlecock, between Horace Walpole, who wished to make him prime-minister, and Lord John

Cavendish, who wished to draw him into opposition. Charles Townshend, a man of splendid eloquence, of lax principles, and of boundless vanity and presumption, would submit to no control. The full extent of his parts, of his ambition, and of his arrogance, had not yet been made manifest; for he had always quailed before the genius and the lofty character of Pitt. But now that Pitt had quitted the House of Commons, and seemed to have abdicated the part of chief minister, Townshend broke loose from all restraint.

While things were in this state, Chatham at length returned to London. He might as well have remained at Marlborough. He would see nobody. He would give no opinion on any public matter. The Duke of Grafton begged piteously for an interview for an hour, for half an hour, for five minutes. The answer was that it was impossible. The King himself repeatedly condescended to expostulate and implore. "Your duty," he wrote, "your own honor, require you to make an effort." The answers to these appeals were commonly written in Lady Chatham's hand, from her lord's dictation; for he had not energy even to use a pen. He flings himself at the King's feet. He is penetrated by the royal goodness, so signally shown to the most unhappy of men. He implores a little more indulgence. He cannot as yet transact business. He cannot see his colleagues. Least of all can he bear the excitement of an interview with majesty.

Some were half inclined to suspect that he was, to use a military phrase, malingering. He had made, they said, a great blunder, and had found it out. His immense popularity, his high reputation for statesmanship, were gone forever. Intoxicated by pride, he had undertaken a task beyond his abilities. He now saw nothing before him but distresses and humiliations; and he had therefore simulated illness, in order to escape from vexations which he had not fortitude to meet. This suspicion, though it derived some color from that weakness which was the most striking blemish of his character, was certainly unfounded.

His mind, before he became first minister, had been, as we have said, in an unsound state; and physical and moral causes now concurred to make the derangement of his faculties complete. The gout, which had been the torment of his whole life, had been suppressed by strong remedies. For the first time since he was a boy at Oxford, he had passed several months without a twinge; but his hand and foot had been relieved at the expense of his nerves. He became melancholy, fanciful, irritable. The embarrassing state of public affairs, the grave responsibility which lay on him, the consciousness of his errors, the disputes of his colleagues, the savage clamors raised by his detractors, bewildered his enfeebled mind. One thing alone, he said, could save him: he must repurchase Hayes. The unwilling consent of the new occupant was extorted by Lady Chatham's entreaties and tears, and her lord was somewhat easier. But if business were mentioned to him, he, once the proudest and boldest of mankind, behaved like an hysterical girl, trembled from head to foot, and burst into a flood of tears.

His colleagues for a time continued to entertain the expectation that his health would soon be restored, and that he would emerge from his retirement; but month followed month, and still he remained hidden in mysterious seclusion, and sunk, as far as they could learn, in the deepest dejection of spirits. They at length ceased to hope or to fear anything from him, and, though he was still nominally prime-minister, took without scruple steps which they knew to be diametrically opposed to all his opinions and feelings, allied themselves with those whom he had proscribed, disgraced those whom he most esteemed, and laid taxes on the Colonies, in the face of the strong declarations which he had recently made.

When he had passed about a year and three quarters in gloomy privacy, the King received a few lines in Lady Chatham's hand. They contained a request, dictated by her lord, that he might be permitted to resign the privy seal. After some civil show of reluctance, the resignation was accepted. Indeed Chatham was

by this time almost as much forgotten as if he had already been lying in Westminster Abbey.

At length the clouds which had gathered over his mind broke, and passed away. His gout returned, and freed him from a more cruel malady. His nerves were newly braced. His spirits became buoyant. He woke as from a sickly dream. It was a strange recovery. Men had been in the habit of talking of him as of one dead, and, when he first showed himself at the King's levee, started as if they had seen a ghost. It was more than two years and a half since he had appeared in public.

He too had cause for wonder. The world which he now entered was not the world which he had quitted. The administration which he had formed had never been, at any one moment, entirely changed; but there had been so many losses and so many accessions, that he could scarcely recognize his own work. Charles Townshend was dead. Lord Shelburne had been dismissed. Conway had sunk into utter insignificance. The Duke of Grafton had fallen into the hands of the Bedfords. The Bedfords had deserted Grenville, had made their peace with the King and with the King's friends, and had been admitted to office. Lord North was chancellor of the exchequer, and was rising fast in importance. Corsica had been given up to France without a struggle. The disputes with the American Colonies had been revived. A general election had taken place. Wilkes had returned from exile, and, outlaw as he was, had been chosen knight of the shire¹ for Middlesex. The multitude was on his side. The Court was obstinately bent on ruining him, and was prepared to shake the very foundations of the Constitution for the sake of a paltry revenge. The House of Commons, assuming to itself an authority which of right belongs only to the whole legislature, had declared Wilkes incapable of sitting in Parliament. Nor had it been thought sufficient to keep him out. Another must be brought in. Since the freeholders of Middlesex had obstinately refused to choose a member acceptable to the

¹ That is, a *county* member of Parliament.

Court, the House had chosen a member for them. This was not the only instance, perhaps not the most disgraceful instance, of the inveterate malignity of the Court. Exasperated by the steady opposition of the Rockingham party, the King's friends had tried to rob a distinguished Whig nobleman of his private estate, and had persisted in their mean wickedness till their own servile majority had revolted from mere disgust and shame. Discontent had spread throughout the nation, and was kept up by stimulants such as had rarely been applied to the public mind. Junius¹ had taken the field; had trampled Sir William Draper in the dust; had well-nigh broken the heart of Blackstone; and had so mangled the reputation of the Duke of Grafton, that his grace had become sick of office, and was beginning to look wistfully towards the shades of Euston. Every principle of foreign, domestic, and Colonial policy which was dear to the heart of Chatham had, during the eclipse of his genius, been violated by the government which he had formed.

The remaining years of his life were spent in vainly struggling against that fatal policy which, at the moment when he might have given it a death-blow, he had been induced to take under his protection. His exertions redeemed his own fame, but they effected little for his country.

He found two parties arrayed against the government,—the party of his own brothers-in-law, the Grenvilles; and the party of Lord Rockingham. On the question of the Middlesex election these parties were agreed,² but on many other important questions they differed widely; and they were, in truth, not less hostile to each other than to the Court. The Grenvilles had, during several years, annoyed the Rockinghams with a succession

¹ "Junius" was the signature of an unknown writer of political controversial letters which appeared in the London Public Advertiser, beginning in 1769, and continuing for about three years. For bitterness of invective and satirical severity, these letters have never been equaled in all literature.

² It was the county of Middlesex that repeatedly returned John Wilkes to Parliament.

of acrimonious pamphlets. It was long before the Rockinghams could be induced to retaliate. But an ill-natured tract, written under Grenville's direction, and entitled "A State of the Nation," was too much for their patience. Burke undertook to defend and avenge his friends, and executed the task with admirable skill and vigor. On every point he was victorious, and nowhere more completely victorious than when he joined issue on those dry and minute questions of statistical and financial detail in which the main strength of Grenville lay. The official drudge, even on his own chosen ground, was utterly unable to maintain the fight against the great orator and philosopher. When Chatham reappeared, Grenville was still writhing with the recent shame and smart of this well-merited chastisement. Cordial coöperation between the two sections of the opposition was impossible. Nor could Chatham easily connect himself with either. His feelings, in spite of many affronts given and received, drew him towards the Grenvilles: for he had strong domestic affections; and his nature, which, though haughty, was by no means obdurate, had been softened by affliction. But from his kinsmen he was separated by a wide difference of opinion on the question of Colonial taxation. A reconciliation, however, took place. He visited Stowe; he shook hands with George Grenville; and the Whig freeholders of Buckinghamshire, at their public dinners, drank many bumpers to the union of the three brothers.

In opinions, Chatham was much nearer to the Rockinghams than to his own relatives; but between him and the Rockinghams there was a gulf not easily to be passed. He had deeply injured them, and in injuring them had deeply injured his country. When the balance was trembling between them and the Court, he had thrown the whole weight of his genius, of his renown, of his popularity, into the scale of misgovernment. It must be added that many eminent members of the party still retained a bitter recollection of the asperity and disdain with which they had been treated by him at the time when he assumed the direction of affairs. It is clear from Burke's pamphlets and

speeches, and still more clear from his private letters and from the language which he held in conversation, that he regarded Chatham with a feeling not far removed from dislike. Chatham was undoubtedly conscious of his error, and desirous to atone for it; but his overtures of friendship, though made with earnestness, and even with unwonted humility, were at first received by Lord Rockingham with cold and austere reserve. Gradually the intercourse of the two statesmen became courteous and even amicable; but the past was never wholly forgotten.

Chatham did not, however, stand alone. Round him gathered a party, small in number, but strong in great and various talents. Lord Camden, Lord Shelburne, Col. Barré, and Dunning (afterwards Lord Ashburton) were the principal members of this connection.

There is no reason to believe, that, from this time till within a few weeks of Chatham's death, his intellect suffered any decay. His eloquence was almost to the last heard with delight; but it was not exactly the eloquence of the House of Lords. That lofty and passionate but somewhat desultory declamation in which he excelled all men, and which was set off by looks, tones, and gestures worthy of Garrick or Talma, was out of place in a small apartment where the audience often consisted of three or four drowsy prelates, three or four old judges accustomed during many years to disregard rhetoric and to look only at facts and arguments, and three or four listless and supercilious men of fashion whom anything like enthusiasm moved to a sneer. In the House of Commons a flash of his eye, a wave of his arm, had sometimes cowed Murray; but in the House of Peers his utmost vehemence and pathos produced less effect than the moderation, the reasonableness, the luminous order, and the serene dignity, which characterized the speeches of Lord Mansfield.¹

¹ Mansfield was, of course, one of the judges "disregardful of rhetoric;" but Macaulay takes it for granted that the reader will know that Mansfield and Murray are one. This kind of assumption, noticeable by non-insular readers, is frequent in Macaulay, and constitutes his one sin against clear-

On the question of the Middlesex election all the three divisions of the opposition acted in concert. No orator in either House defended what is now universally admitted to have been the constitutional cause with more ardor or eloquence than Chatham. Before this subject had ceased to occupy the public mind, George Grenville died. His party rapidly melted away, and in a short time most of his adherents appeared on the ministerial benches.

Had George Grenville lived many months longer, the friendly ties which, after years of estrangement and hostility, had been renewed between him and his brother-in-law, would in all probability have been a second time violently dissolved; for now the quarrel between England and the North American Colonies took a gloomy and terrible aspect. Oppression provoked resistance; resistance was made the pretext for fresh oppression. The warnings of all the greatest statesmen of the age were lost on an imperious court and a deluded nation. Soon a Colonial senate confronted the British Parliament. Then the Colonial militia crossed bayonets with the British regiments. At length the commonwealth was torn asunder. Two millions of Englishmen, who fifteen years before had been as loyal to their prince and as proud of their country as the people of Kent or Yorkshire, separated themselves by a solemn act from the empire. For a time it seemed that the insurgents would struggle to small purpose against the vast financial and military means of the mother country; but disasters, following one another in rapid succession, rapidly dispelled the illusions of national vanity. At length a great British force,¹ exhausted, famished, harassed on every side by a hostile peasantry, was compelled to deliver up its arms. Those governments which England had in the late war so signally humbled, and which had during many years been sullenly brooding over the recollections of Quebec, of Minden, and of

ness (see *Devonshire . . . Cavendish*, p. 53; *Buckingham . . . Villiers*, p. 46).

¹ That of Burgoyne. The surrender took place Oct. 13, 1777.

the Moro,¹ now saw with exultation that the day of revenge was at hand. France recognized the independence of the United States; and there could be little doubt that the example would soon be followed by Spain.

Chatham and Rockingham had cordially concurred in opposing every part of the fatal policy which had brought the state into this dangerous situation, but their paths now diverged. Lord Rockingham thought, and, as the event proved, thought most justly, that the revolted Colonies were separated from the empire forever, and that the only effect of prolonging the war on the American continent would be to divide resources which it was desirable to concentrate. If the hopeless attempt to subjugate Pennsylvania and Virginia were abandoned, war against the House of Bourbon might possibly be avoided, or, if inevitable, might be carried on with success and glory. We might even indemnify ourselves for part of what we had lost, at the expense of those foreign enemies who had hoped to profit by our domestic dissensions. Lord Rockingham, therefore, and those who acted with him, conceived that the wisest course now open to England was to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and to turn her whole force against her European enemies.

Chatham, it should seem, ought to have taken the same side. Before France had taken any part in our quarrel with the Colonies, he had repeatedly, and with great energy of language, declared that it was impossible to conquer America, and he could not without absurdity maintain that it was easier to conquer France and America together than America alone. But his passions overpowered his judgment, and made him blind to his own inconsistency. The very circumstances which made the separation of the Colonies inevitable made it to him altogether insupportable. The dismemberment of the empire seemed to him less ruinous and humiliating, when produced by domestic dissensions,

¹ Morro Castle, the fort of Havana, captured by the English admiral, Pocock, in 1762. Havana was restored to Spain the next year in exchange for Florida.

than when produced by foreign interference. His blood boiled at the degradation of his country. Whatever lowered her among the nations of the earth, he felt as a personal outrage to himself. And the feeling was natural. He had made her so great. He had been so proud of her, and she had been so proud of him. He remembered how, more than twenty years before, in a day of gloom and dismay, when her possessions were torn from her, when her flag was dishonored, she had called on him to save her. He remembered the sudden and glorious change which his energy had wrought, the long series of triumphs, the days of thanksgiving, the nights of illumination. Fired by such recollections, he determined to separate himself from those who advised that the independence of the Colonies should be acknowledged. That he was in error will scarcely, we think, be disputed by his warmest admirers. Indeed, the treaty by which, a few years later, the republic of the United States was recognized, was the work of his most attached adherents and of his favorite son.

The Duke of Richmond had given notice of an address to the throne against the further prosecution of hostilities with America. Chatham had during some time absented himself from Parliament in consequence of his growing infirmities. He determined to appear in his place on this occasion, and to declare that his opinions were decidedly at variance with those of the Rockingham party. He was in a state of great excitement. His medical attendants were uneasy, and strongly advised him to calm himself, and to remain at home; but he was not to be controlled. His son William, and his son-in-law Lord Mahon, accompanied him to Westminster. He rested himself in the chancellor's room till the debate commenced, and then, leaning on his two young relations, limped to his seat. The slightest particulars of that day were remembered, and have been carefully recorded. He bowed, it was remarked, with great courtliness, to those peers who rose to make way for him and his supporters. His crutch was in his hand. He wore, as was his fashion, a rich velvet coat. His legs were swathed in flannel. His wig was so large, and his

face so emaciated, that none of his features could be discerned, except the high curve of his nose, and his eyes, which still retained a gleam of the old fire.

When the Duke of Richmond had spoken, Chatham rose. For some time his voice was inaudible. At length his tones became distinct, and his action animated. Here and there his hearers caught a thought or an expression which reminded them of William Pitt. But it was clear that he was not himself. He lost the thread of his discourse, hesitated, repeated the same words several times, and was so confused, that, in speaking of the Act of Settlement, he could not recall the name of the Electress Sophia. The House listened in solemn silence, and with the aspect of profound respect and compassion. The stillness was so deep that the dropping of a handkerchief would have been heard. The Duke of Richmond replied with great tenderness and courtesy; but while he spoke, the old man was observed to be restless and irritable. The duke sat down. Chatham stood up again, pressed his hand on his breast, and sank down in an apoplectic fit. Three or four lords who sat near him caught him in his fall. The House broke up in confusion. The dying man was carried to the residence of one of the officers of Parliament, and was so far restored as to be able to bear a journey to Hayes. At Hayes, after lingering a few weeks, he expired in his seventieth year. His bed was watched to the last with anxious tenderness by his wife and children; and he well deserved their care. Too often haughty and wayward to others, to them he had been almost effeminately kind. He had through life been dreaded by his political opponents, and regarded with more awe than love even by his political associates. But no fear seems to have mingled with the affection which his fondness, constantly overflowing in a thousand endearing forms, had inspired in the little circle at Hayes.

Chatham, at the time of his decease, had not, in both Houses of Parliament, ten personal adherents. Half the public men of the age had been estranged from him by his errors, and the other

half by the exertions which he had made to repair his errors. His last speech had been an attack at once on the policy pursued by the government, and on the policy recommended by the opposition. But death restored him to his old place in the affection of his country. Who could hear unmoved of the fall of that which had been so great, and which had stood so long? The circumstances, too, seemed rather to belong to the tragic stage than to real life. A great statesman, full of years and honors, led forth to the Senate House by a son of rare hopes, and stricken down in full council while straining his feeble voice to rouse the drooping spirit of his country, could not but be remembered with peculiar veneration and tenderness. The few detractors who ventured to murmur were silenced by the indignant clamors of a nation which remembered only the lofty genius, the unsullied probity, the undisputed services, of him who was no more. For once the chiefs of all parties were agreed. A public funeral, a public monument, were eagerly voted. The debts of the deceased were paid. A provision was made for his family. The city of London requested that the remains of the great man whom she had so long loved and honored might rest under the dome of her magnificent cathedral. But the petition came too late. Everything was already prepared for the interment in Westminster Abbey.

Though men of all parties had concurred in decreeing posthumous honors to Chatham, his corpse was attended to the grave almost exclusively by opponents of the government. The banner of the lordship of Chatham was borne by Col. Barré, attended by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Rockingham. Burke, Savile, and Dunning upheld the pall. Lord Camden was conspicuous in the procession. The chief mourner was young William Pitt. After the lapse of more than twenty-seven years, in a season as dark and perilous, his own shattered frame and broken heart were laid, with the same pomp, in the same consecrated mold.¹

¹ See Macaulay's fine essay on the Younger Pitt.

Chatham sleeps near the northern door of the church, in a spot which has ever since been appropriated to statesmen, as the other end of the same transept has long been to poets. Mansfield rests there, and the second William Pitt, and Fox, and Grattan, and Canning, and Wilberforce. In no other cemetery do so many great citizens lie within so narrow a space. High over those venerable graves towers the stately monument of Chatham; and from above, his effigy, graven by a cunning hand, seems still, with eagle face and outstretched arm, to bid England be of good cheer, and to hurl defiance at her foes. The generation which reared that memorial of him has disappeared. The time has come when the rash and indiscriminate judgments which his contemporaries passed on his character may be calmly revised by history. And history, while, for the warning of vehement, high, daring natures, she notes his many errors, will yet deliberately pronounce, that, among the eminent men whose bones lie near his, scarcely one has left a more stainless, and none a more splendid, name.

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